



Cleaning Pharmacies during Covid-19 pandemic

This document has been prepared to give pharmacy contractors an overview of the guidance around pharmacy cleaning and when it would be appropriate to do so. Individual companies may have their own guidance centrally produced and teams are advised to check with their own management or environmental teams in case of any query.

Our communications from PHE confirm that the advice from their Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) team **does not recommend** deep cleaning of pharmacies so there is no need for community pharmacy to engage specialist cleaning firms.

However, good general cleaning and hygiene is very important to reduce infection risk. 'Frequently touched' surfaces such as door handles, lockers, tills, computer keyboards, hand-held devices, CD cupboards and telephones handsets should be cleaned **at least twice daily**. You may wish to clean the counter more frequently, depending on the number of patient contacts. Regular staff hand washing and use of hand sanitiser is vital.

The current IPC guidance has clear information on environmental decontamination.

Management of equipment and all areas of the pharmacy

Decontamination of equipment and the whole pharmacy should be performed using either:

- a combined detergent/disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine (ppm available chlorine (av.cl.)); or
- a general-purpose neutral detergent in a solution of warm water followed by a disinfectant solution of 1,000ppm av.cl

Products must be prepared and used according to the manufacturers' instructions and recommended product 'contact times' must be followed. If alternative cleaning agents/disinfectants are to be used, they should only on the advice of the IPC team and conform to EN standard 14476 for viricidal activity.

Equipment

Patient care equipment should be single-use items if possible. Reusable (communal) non-invasive equipment should as far as possible be allocated to the individual patient or cohort of patients (for example re-usable MDS trays).

Reusable (communal) non-invasive equipment must be decontaminated:

- between each patient and

- after patient use after blood and body fluid contamination
- at regular intervals as part of equipment cleaning

Environment

- If the pharmacy consultation room is used it must be decontaminated at least daily
- Staff should be trained to 'don and doff' any PPE used correctly (avoiding contact with bare skin)
- Avoid the use of fans which re-circulate the air
- Ensure any PPE is disposed immediately after use, separate to general waste
- There is no need to use disposable plates, cutlery etc – this can be washed by hand using detergent and hot water
- All areas of the pharmacy should be kept clean and clutter free. All non-essential items should be removed from the dispensary, the medicines counter and shop floor
- Delivery vans should be cleaned regular in the same manner as the pharmacy itself
- All staff, if they feel they have any COVID-19 symptoms must speak to their pharmacist or pharmacy manager immediately

Further documents

NHSE Community Pharmacy SOP

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/standard-operating-procedure-communitypharmacy/>

It is on page 10 of the 22 March SOP but you will have to search when it gets updated (imminent at the time of this document's publication)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control> under "COVID-19: infection prevention control guidance" Infection control in Primary Care

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/infection-control/> section 4

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wn-cov-guidance-for-primary-care/wn-cov-interimguidance-for-primary-care#environmental-cleaning-following-a-possible-case>