



Dear Colleague

**COMMUNITY PHARMACY VENTILATION
ENHANCEMENT ALLOWANCE**

Summary

1. This Circular advises of a new ventilation enhancement allowance for community pharmacies in Scotland. Funding has been made available from the Scottish Government to be paid to community pharmacy contractors that meet the conditions of entitlement for the new allowance.

Action

2. Territorial Health Boards and Practitioner and Counter Fraud Services (P&CFS) of NHS National Services Scotland should ensure they are familiar with the Memorandum to this letter, and in particular the requirement to have the necessary arrangements in place to manage the administration and payment of the ventilation enhancement allowance to qualifying community pharmacy contractors. The Scottish Government will provide additional instructions to Health Boards via email on how information should be sent to P&CFS.
3. Territorial Health Boards are asked to immediately copy and issue the Memorandum to this letter, along with the allowance claim form provided separately with this letter and Memorandum, to all community pharmacy contractors on a Board's Pharmaceutical List.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Alison Strath
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

Pharmacy and
Medicines Division

03 March 2022

Addresses

For action

NHS Board Chief
Executives

For Information

NHS Directors of Pharmacy
Director Practitioner
Services, NHS NSS

Enquiries to:

Local NHS Board Primary Care
teams (contact details to be
provided by NHS Boards)

Summary

1. This Memorandum advises on a new ventilation enhancement allowance for community pharmacies.

Background

2. In Scotland, the [Winter Respiratory Infections in Health and Care Settings IPC Addendum guidance](#) came into effect on Monday 13 December 2021 for all areas of health and social care, including community pharmacies.
3. While the situation with COVID-19 has improved recently in Scotland, we also need to be mindful that the situation can deteriorate relatively quickly. As such, it is important that the community pharmacy sector does what it can to protect members of the public, patients and staff from the risk of respiratory infections, including COVID-19.

Funding Support for Ventilation Enhancement

4. The Scottish Government is making funding available to help community pharmacy contractors purchase air extraction equipment (air scrubbers and similar equipment that conditions or recycles the air within a space) for their premises where a pharmacy has fitted or committed to fit air extraction equipment on or after 1 April 2020.

Ventilation Enhancement Allowance Payment Amount

5. Each community pharmacy contractor may claim costs for the purchase of ventilation enhancement equipment up to a maximum ventilation enhancement allowance payment of £1,500 per individual premises.
6. The value of the ventilation enhancement allowance payment will be the actual amount paid by each contractor per site for the purchase of the ventilation enhancement equipment (**not including VAT**), as confirmed by the relevant invoices and receipts provided to the Health Board with the allowance claim form.

Conditions of Entitlement

7. It is a condition of entitlement for payment of the ventilation enhancement allowance that:
 - the ventilation enhancement equipment for which an allowance is claimed meets the minimum recommended ventilation rate of **6 Air changes per hour**. Air cleaners and scrubbers are eligible, **but air purifiers are not permitted**. Further information can be found in the [Annex](#).
 - the ventilation enhancement equipment purchased is maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines. The cost of ongoing maintenance (as per

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the manufacturer's recommendations) is not included within the ventilation enhancement allowance.

- the ventilation enhancement equipment is used to support clinical practice in one or more consulting room locations in the premises.
- Community pharmacy contractors are ineligible to claim for the allowance if a consultation room has a window to provide ventilation.

Making a Claim for Payment

8. Community pharmacy contractors that intend to submit a claim for the ventilation enhancement allowance must either:

- complete and send the separately provided claim form to their local NHS Board Primary Care pharmacy email address by 31 March 2022, along with all relevant invoices and receipts associated with the purchase of the ventilation enhancement equipment;

or

- complete and send the separately provided claim form with the confirmation purchase order, an appropriate order reference, expected delivery date and delivery address to their Health Board by 31 March 2022. Contractors must provide final relevant invoice and receipts to the Health Board for payment verification purposes.

9. **Under no circumstances will applications be accepted after the 31 March** and the failure to provide relevant invoices and receipts will result in a clawback of the full allowance. Should the value of the equipment purchased be less than £1,500, the balance will be deducted from the July payment schedule.

10. Only one claim is permitted per community pharmacy (even if ventilation enhancement equipment is used in more than one consulting room), and an individual claim form must be submitted for each location. Evidence other than invoices and receipts of purchase may be accepted at the local Health Board's discretion.

11. The claim form must be completed and signed by the contractor, the responsible pharmacist or a person who is duly authorised to act on behalf of the owner, and who is able to confirm that the equipment meets the required standards.

12. Claims for the ventilation enhancement allowance can be made for ventilation enhancement equipment purchased on or after 1 April 2020. This means that sites which have already invested in ventilation enhancement equipment have the opportunity to recoup some or all of this financial cost.

13. Where the amount receipted is less than the maximum ventilation enhancement allowance of £1,500, only the actual receipted value will be paid. **As set out in paragraph 6, the allowance paid to practice premises will not include VAT.**

Payment timescales

14. If the local Health Board is satisfied that the claim and relevant invoices and receipts are valid and meet all requirements, they will notify P&CFS who will then process and pay the relevant allowance amount to the practice as follows:

- for valid claims sent to the Health Board by 31 March 2022, the allowance will be paid to contractors in the March 2022 (paid May 2022) schedule;

Recovery of Allowance Payments

15. Contractors may be required to pay back all or part of the ventilation enhancement allowance if they fail to meet the conditions of entitlement.

Enquiries

16. Any enquiries arising from this Memorandum should be taken up with your local NHS Board, who will provide the relevant contact details.

**Professor Alison Strath
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer
Pharmacy and Medicine Division
Chief Medical Officer Directorate
Scottish Government**

Further information on ventilation standards

The legal requirement to provide ventilation is contained within the [Workplace \(Health, Safety and Welfare\) Regulations 1992](#). In addition, the [Scottish Building Standards Technical Handbook \(non-domestic\)](#) in Scotland provide the regulations for the ventilation requirements to maintain indoor air quality. Specific requirements for healthcare can be found in [Scottish Healthcare Technical Memorandum \(SHTM\) 03-01 “Specialised ventilation for healthcare premises”](#). Additional information is also set out in the [Chartered Institution of Building Service Engineers \(CIBSE\) Guide B](#).

The minimum recommended ventilation rate is 6 Air changes per hour (ACH).

The use of carbon dioxide sensors may assist in identifying areas of poor ventilation. Concentrations of 600 part per million (ppm) or less are generally considered to represent good ventilation. Areas where concentrations of 1500ppm are observed should be treated as a priority for improved ventilation. It should be noted that these figures are indicative only and are dependent on a number of factors including occupancy and activity.

The practice may decide to utilise air cleaning devices as a temporary measure until the permanent ventilation is working. These devices do not provide any additional fresh air into a space as required above but, depending on the device, remove particles in the space. Air cleaning devices are not a permanent solution to resolving ventilation issues in a space. These devices should utilise HEPA filtration and preferably in conjunction with a UVC source and be sized correctly for the room in question. Some devices may generate unwanted chemical by-products through their operation. Details on selection criteria for air cleaning devices can be found in [CIBSE documentation “COVID-19: Air cleaning technologies”](#).

It is recommended that professional engineering advice is sought regarding all aspects of the ventilation.