



# COVID-19 Primary Care bulletin

25 March 2020

## COVID-19: latest guidance for primary care

Dear primary care colleagues,

Yesterday we called on people across the country to act as [NHS Volunteer Responders](#) and more than 400,000 people have signed up already. This group will be crucial to support the vulnerable patients we have identified, and the work you are doing. Volunteers will be able to help with tasks such as delivering medicines from pharmacies; driving patients to appointments; bringing them home from hospital and regular phone calls to check they are ok. We would encourage all practices to sign up as referrers and further guidance on how you can make best use of this resource for your patients and communities will be made available shortly.

We have sent a [further update to dentists](#) with details on their role in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, including the stopping of non-urgent dental care. There will be a webinar next week for dental colleagues and we will share details of this soon.

To reduce the burden on GP practices a new online system, created by the NHS and the Department for Work and Pensions, is now live for patients to be emailed a digital isolation note. Isolation notes provide patients with evidence for their employers that they have been advised to self-isolate due to coronavirus, either because they have symptoms or they live with someone who has symptoms, and so cannot work. As isolation notes can be obtained without contacting a doctor, this will reduce the pressure on GP surgeries and prevent people needing to leave their homes. The notes can be accessed through the [NHS website](#) and [NHS 111 online](#). After answering a few questions, an isolation note will be emailed to the user. If they don't have an email address, they can have the note sent to a trusted family member or friend, or directly to their employer. The service can also be used to generate an isolation note on behalf of someone else.

From Thursday 26 March spine session timeouts will be extended. Users authenticating onto Spine are usually given a maximum session length of 10 hours, however given the current pressures on the NHS and the inevitably extended working patterns across the organisation, we have agreed to extend the Spine session length to 12 hours. If you find issues with this change, by testing or consideration, please contact the [platforms.supportdesk@nhs.net](mailto:platforms.supportdesk@nhs.net) as soon as possible.

Community pharmacists and technicians are invited to [join a webinar](#) on the COVID-19 response this evening, Wednesday 25th March 7-8pm.

Please do [join our next Primary Care \(General Practice\) webinar](#) tomorrow, Thursday 26th March 5-6pm.

Thank you again for all you are doing,

Nikki and Ed



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### Additional information

**Social Prescribing webinar recording.** The social prescribing webinar for link workers which took place today will be made available on the social prescribing online collaborative network. To join the network, email [england.socialprescribing@nhs.net](mailto:england.socialprescribing@nhs.net).

**How to establish a remote 'total triage' model in general practice in response to Covid-19 - webinar recording.** This webinar was held on Monday 23 March and [a recording is now available](#) online. This webinar outlined practical steps colleagues in general practice should take to establish a 'total triage' model using online and telephone triage. During the webinar we were joined by Prof Trish Greenhalgh from the University of Oxford, who highlighted how best to utilise video consultations in response to Covid-19.

### Nikki and Ed's Link of the Day

[BMJ: Covid-19: a remote assessment in primary care](#)

Primary Care  
website

COVID-19 Advice

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