

## COVID-19 SUMMARY GUIDANCE #2

### Pharmacy operations and facilities: ensuring safety for all and continuity of service

#### Professional oversight/managing pharmacist

In case the managing pharmacist cannot assure his/her presence and role at the pharmacy, these can be taken up by a second pharmacist who may or not belong to the pharmacy personnel.

#### Pharmacy team

Measures should be taken to ensure continuity of pharmacy activities while minimising the risk of contamination. Examples of measures include dividing personnel into different shifts (for example, one team in the morning and the other at night or on alternating days), reorganising the workspace to maintain safe distances as much as possible, and establishing disinfecting procedures and schedules.

If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 among the pharmacy staff, all staff members who had close contact with the infected colleague (in the same shift, for example) should be followed up as potentially infected and may be required to remain isolated for two weeks according to local public health recommendations. Pharmacy operations would have to be adapted if a staff member were to isolate, including changes to scheduling and pharmacy working hours.

#### Opening hours

In case a pharmacy cannot assure its normal opening hours due to non-availability of staff, the new opening hours should be displayed in a visible place at least outside the pharmacy.

#### Patient/customer service

In order to ensure the continuity of the supply of medicines and services (and particularly in communities where there is only one pharmacy in a certain area, which may vary from country to country), contact with patients/customers should be minimised through different measures.

Various methods can be put into place to reduce the number of individuals at a single time inside the pharmacy. Online prescription refill ordering, electronic prescriptions, home delivery, kerb-side pick-up, and telepharmacy for counselling and education are several examples. Medicines may also be dispensed through a small window on the facade or door.

If possible, a dedicated staff member may be present at the entrance to triage patients who may be at a greater risk of being infected (recent travel, recent contact with infected individuals, presentation of symptoms).

Inside the pharmacy, a transparent plastic shield or divider can be placed on the counter or in front of the dispensing area. There should be clear marks on the floor to indicate the direction in which customers should navigate inside the pharmacy as well as to indicate the 1 to 2 meter distance between customers and staff. If pharmacy staff are required to leave the dispensing area to counsel patients, they should be advised to use appropriate personal protective equipment.

#### Medicines supply

Whenever possible, delivery of medicines to pharmacies should be done without the courier entering the pharmacy (or at least the non-public areas of the pharmacy). Cases used by wholesale distributors for the delivery of medicines should be cleaned and disinfected before they are taken inside the pharmacy facilities.

For details and supporting references, consult the complete guidance document at [www.fip.org/coronavirus](http://www.fip.org/coronavirus)

This document is based on the available evidence and recommendations of reputable organisations at the time of publishing. It will be updated as new knowledge becomes available. 14 July 2020.

### **Medicines home delivery**

In order to ensure the appropriate supply of medicines to patients and the public, and especially in small towns where other pharmacies may have closed, open pharmacies may organise the home delivery of medicines. Pharmacies that are able to offer this service are encouraged to do so, especially for patients who are in home quarantine or isolation, who belong to a high risk group or who have reduced mobility. This service should be complemented with a follow-up call with the patient or carer to ensure optimal use of the medicines. The home delivery service should not be provided without the appropriate pharmaceutical care, as necessary. Digital health tools and educational materials may also be used to assist in patient counselling and education.

In the case of home delivery, the person making the delivery should avoid any direct contact with the patient as well as their personal objects and must be adequately protected. Medicines and other items can be left outside the door of the patient/customer or in another designated place, and the deliverer should keep a safe distance of 1 to 2 metres while visually ensuring that medicines are collected by the patient or an authorised person.

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