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| **Chief Medical Officer Directorate**  **Primary Care Directorate**  E: [ceu@gov.scot](mailto:ceu@gov.scot)  T: 0300 244 4000 |  |
| To: GP Practices |  |

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9 November 2021

Dear Colleagues,

We are writing to inform you about a new service which will be available in community pharmacies from 9th November 2021.

The Women’s Health Plan, published by the Scottish Government in August 2021 included a commitment to improve access to contraception services. From 9th November, primarily as part of a consultation for emergency hormonal contraception (EHC), community pharmacies will be able to offer individuals a temporary 3-month supply of desogestrel (progestogen-only pill) during that EHC consultation, if clinically appropriate to do so.

This approach is not intended to replace existing services currently providing contraception, but is to widen access and bridge the gap between EHC and use of longer term contraception, therefore minimising the risk of unplanned pregnancy.

GP practice staff should be aware that community pharmacies will be able to supply the progestogen-only pill for a 3-month period in line with a national Patient Group Direction (PGD). Thereafter, individuals wishing to continue with a regular supply or access an alternative method of contraception, may contact their GP practice to request a repeat prescription or request an appointment to discuss their options.

Community pharmacies will notify an individual’s GP practice that a supply has been made, so that their medical history may be updated and to support the provision of ongoing care. They will also direct individuals to patient information about the different types of contraception available.

We would appreciate your assistance to ensure that GP practice staff are made aware of this development. Further guidance and details on the community pharmacy bridging contraception service, which is aimed particularly at practice nurses and practice managers is attached.

Yours sincerely,



**PROFESSOR ALISON STRATH FRPharmS NAUREEN AHMED**

**CHIEF PHARMACEUTICAL OFFICER DEPUTY DIRECTOR, GENERAL PRACTICE**