

## 1. Getting Started

### Training

Before signing up to provide the service pharmacists need to make sure that they have completed all the necessary training. There is quite a bit to work through so allow plenty of time for this. Some of the courses listed are either/or, so you only need to choose one of the options on the list. Some only require certain sections to be completed so it's not quite as daunting as it first looks!

CPWY has created a useful summary of the training requirements, which can be found [here](#).

Work through the [CPE Pharmacist Implementation Checklist](#) which includes links to the CPE webinars (all well worth a watch as they have tips and guidance from pharmacists already providing the service and can help to build confidence).

### Providing the Service

Unlike other community pharmacy services, the PCS does not have to be provided throughout your full opening hours. There is flexibility in the service specification that allows you to offer the service during specific clinic times e.g. you could book patients into appointment slots at specific times to allow you to plan your staffing levels accordingly. This is particularly useful for initiation appointments, which may take longer to complete. Continuation supplies can be completed in a shorter time, so you may wish to offer those on a walk-in basis.



## 2. Resources

### Community Pharmacy England (CPE)

There are lots of useful resources to help you provide the PCS on the CPE [Contraceptive Service](#) pages. The [Pre-consultation Questionnaire](#) is a useful tool that can be used to shorten the length of the consultation by gathering most of the required information beforehand.

### AccuRx

[AccuRx](#) is an NHS approved direct patient messaging service which allows you to send patients a text message using their NHS number. You can register on the site **for free** using your NHSmail address. Once registered you can create a template message that can be sent to patients before their appointment, directing them to recommended websites to help them choose which type of contraception would suit them best.

An example of a template message here:

You can also use AccuRx to carry out online video consultations which may be a preferred option for some patients. They can have the consultation online and then collect the medication later

**PATIENT, Example (40y)**  
NHS: 777 777 7777 • DOB: 08-Nov-1984

To:

Dear Example,

I understand that you would like to start using contraception. Please take a look at these websites to help you to decide which contraception would suit you best before you attend your appointment with us.

<https://www.brook.org.uk/topics/contraception/>

<https://www.contraceptionchoices.org>

Thank you,

349/612 · 3 fragments

This free feature can also be used for Pharmacy First video consultations, so well worth signing up for.

## Faculty of Sexual Reproductive Health (FRSH)

There are useful resources on the FRSH website, and you will find links to them throughout the [service specification](#), in the PGDs, on the CPE website and on the IT platform that you use to record your consultations.

The UKMEC [clinical tool](#) for initiating contraception is **highly recommended** as it takes you through an individualised patient triage and tells you which contraceptive options are safe for the patient to use.

There are 4 FRSH documents which are referenced in the service specification and PGDs that contain useful guidance for various situations. The documents are quite big, but you only need to look at a few of the pages (the rest of the document is just the supporting evidence for the advice being given).

1. [FRSH guidance on progestogen-only pills](#) – you only need the executive summaries on pages 10 – 15 (inclusive)
2. [FRSH guidance on combined hormonal contraception](#) – you only need the executive summaries on pages 10 – 15 (inclusive)
3. [FRSH guideline emergency contraception](#) – you only need the executive summaries on pages 10 – 14 (inclusive)
4. [FRSH Clinical Guidance: Drug interactions with hormonal contraception](#) – a useful document and not as long as the other ones!


## 3. Useful Additional Information for Pharmacists Providing the Service

(Taken from CPPE NHS Pharmacy Contraception Service Oral Contraception Workshop. Further information can be found on [GPNotebook](#) website).

### Side-effects

Oestrogen side-effects	Progestogen side-effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Menorrhagia</li><li>• Breast fullness</li><li>• Migraine-type headaches</li><li>• Fluid retention</li><li>• Tiredness</li><li>• Irritability</li><li>• Nausea</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scanty menses</li><li>• Dry vagina</li><li>• Breast tenderness</li><li>• Dull type of headache</li><li>• Appetite increase</li><li>• Weight gain</li><li>• Premenstrual depression</li><li>• Leg cramps</li><li>• Softening of ligaments</li><li>• Acne</li><li>• Greasy hair</li><li>• Low mood</li><li>• Low libido, especially if associated with low mood (but it can also sometimes help with low libido)</li></ul>
Try changing to a lower oestrogen, or a pill with more androgenic activity.	Try changing to a less androgenic progestogen, or a higher oestrogen pill.

### Androgenicity of Progestogens

Progestogen	Example brands	Higher androgenicity
1st generation e.g. norethisterone	Brevinor	 (Tends to cause more progestogen side-effects)  <b>Lower androgenicity</b> (Tends to cause more oestrogen side-effects)
2nd generation e.g. levonorgestrel	Rigevidon	
3rd generation e.g. desogestrel	Gedarel	
Newer e.g. drospirinone	Lucette	

## 4. Local Formularies

Links to all local formularies are available on the CPWY website [here](#).