

Letter to LRFs

Thank you for the work you are doing on PPE and for the significant impact your work has had on getting PPE supplies to frontline services during the pandemic.

On Friday 10 April, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced a new online portal to enable primary and social care providers in England to order critical Covid-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This week we are pleased to update you on the roll out plan for the PPE Portal, which should help to significantly reduce the pressure on LRFs in the coming weeks.

The PPE Portal, developed in partnership with eBay, has been tested with the sector and is now being scaled up nationally over the coming weeks. We aim to invite all GPs and small residential and domiciliary social care services in England to use the portal over the next 2 weeks. This will be in a phased approach confirmed at the start of each week. All remaining LRF regions are due to be invited this week (w/c 01/06).

During this phase of the roll-out, **GPs and small social care services (care homes with 24 beds or fewer and home care with 99 clients or fewer)** in those areas will be invited to register on the portal by the end of this week.

Please ensure that all these providers routinely check their email accounts registered with the CQC/MHRA.

We are focussing on small care providers because our data shows that, although they account for half of all care provision, they are less likely to be registered with wholesalers. It's therefore important that we ensure that they have the option of quickly joining the portal should they need to.

While we are rolling out the portal to certain providers, LRFs should continue to provide PPE to those who need it in their region. In the longer term, the portal aims to replace LRFs as the emergency mechanism for ordering PPE for GPs and small social care providers. As the portal rolls out, LRFs should encourage small care providers and GPs who approach them to use their business as usual routes to PPE, turning to the portal for top-up supplies and only turning to the LRF as a very last resort. The NSDR route is still available in emergency situations.

Throughout this transition period, we are constantly monitoring the PPE we supply through the Portal, LRFs and wholesaler routes to ensure we balance the supply with the demand for each of these routes.

Once invited, users will be able to place an order for PPE **once a week**.

How providers register:

- Providers will receive an invitation email from DHSC to register on the portal.
- Providers should use the link within the email to access the portal and complete the registration process.
- After registering, providers will receive email confirmation. Providers are asked to check their junk mailbox if the email is not received.

Please note that only providers contacted directly by DHSC will be able to register and so we ask that other emails publicising the service or suggesting that providers try the link are not sent out.

Current order limits

GPs can order:

- **One combined pack**, containing 50 IIR masks, 200 aprons and 400 gloves (200 pairs), **per week** or up to this amount of separate items

Small social care providers can order:

- **One combined pack**, containing 100 IIR masks, 400 aprons and 800 gloves (400 pairs), **per week** or up to this amount of separate items
- These limits may change as demand, the PPE portal, and the wider distribution system for PPE develop over time.
- PPE ordered through the portal should arrive within 48 hours if the order is placed before 1pm. Orders placed after 1pm will be subject to an additional 24-hours.
- Providers should continue to use existing suppliers for other vital equipment.
- The PPE offered on the portal will be **free of charge** for all invited customers.

If providers have problems accessing the site or registering, they should contact nhs-ppe.site-support@ebay.com. Other queries can be raised with customer services at: 0800 876 6802. We are partnering with eBay to deliver this service.

Thank you again for all your hard work in getting PPE to those who need it.