

Medicines and medical products supply: government updates no-deal Brexit plans

The government has announced plans to launch procurement exercises to secure freight capacity if the UK leaves the EU with no deal.

Medicines and medical products supply: government updates no-deal Brexit plans

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) will lead a procurement exercise to secure an 'express freight service'. It will transport small medical supply consignments into the UK within 24 hours if the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

This is designed to support the uninterrupted supply of medicines and medical products where there is an urgent need or where a suppliers' own logistics plans are disrupted.

Additional plans are also being put in place for a freight capacity framework agreement that will provide government departments with the ability to secure freight capacity for our critical supply chains as and when required. Medicines and medical products will be prioritised on capacity that is procured.

This latest procurement activity forms part of the wider plan for minimising any supply disruption. As well as freight capacity, this includes the building up of buffer stocks across the following sectors:

- medicines
- medical devices and clinical consumables
- blood and transplants
- vaccines and countermeasures
- supplies for clinical trials
- non-clinical goods and services

It also includes:

- additional warehouse space for stockpiled medicines, including ambient, refrigerated and controlled drug storage

- working with industry to improve trader readiness in preparation for the new customs procedures that will come into force on day 1 if we leave the EU without a deal
- changing or clarifying regulatory requirements so that companies can continue to sell their products in the UK if we have no deal
- arrangements to deal with shortages in addition to normal shortage management routes, enabling ministers to issue serious shortage protocols to pharmacists

All these arrangements echo the plans put in place ahead of 29 March and will be essential to the continuation of medicines and medical products if the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

The department continues to centrally coordinate contingency measures to mitigate risks to supply. This removes the need for any stockpiling at local level, which could cause medicine shortages and put patient care at risk.

Leaving the EU with a deal remains the government's priority. However, it must plan for every eventuality, including no deal.

DHSC continues to work closely with the devolved administrations, industry trade bodies and suppliers, the NHS and other main stakeholders to ensure that it is as prepared for leaving the EU without a deal in October as it was on 29 March and 12 April.

More information can be found in the [written ministerial statement](#) to the House of Commons on Tuesday 26 June and a [letter from the government to suppliers](#).

New allergen labelling law to be introduced by government

Government has announced plans to introduce a new allergen labelling law to help further protect the UK's two million people living with food allergy

New allergen labelling law to be

introduced by government

The government plans to introduce the new legislation this summer which will mandate full ingredients labelling for foods which are prepacked for direct sale. It is proposed that the new laws will come into force in England, Wales and Northern Ireland by summer 2021 – giving food businesses time to adapt to the change.

The Government Chemist has a long standing interest in food allergy, focused around acknowledged difficulties in allergen analysis. We are hosting an international meeting of [Professor Clare Mills'](#) Manchester Food Allergy Network, MFAN, on Wednesday, 3 July 2019. Organised by Professor Mills, Michael Walker and Gill Holcombe, the meeting will discuss a framework for developing best practice guidance for allergen analysis.

We are also collaborating with [Professor Katrina Campbell](#) of the Institute of Global Food Security in Queen's University Belfast in organising a conference on 21 October 2019 looking at the human, analytical and regulatory implications of food allergy.

The Government Chemist strives to understand industry best practice so as to interpret allergen measurement results in the right context and offer advice to businesses, regulators, enforcement authorities and consumers on request to prevent harm to consumers.

Michael Walker commented on the Government announcement today:

Allergen management in the food industry is a complex and increasingly pressing issue, with pre-packaged foods constituting a larger proportion of what we eat. Regulation which ensures clarity about ingredients and food manufacturing processes will help reduce risk to consumers.

[More information about the Government announcement](#)

For more information about food testing, allergens or the work the Government Chemist carries out contact:

Government Actuary's Department: terms of business

This document sets out the terms on which we provide actuarial services to you.