

# New service to deliver urgent medicines and medical products into UK

The Department of Health and Social Care is strengthening its Brexit preparations with a £25 million contract to set up an express freight service to deliver medicines and medical products into the country.

The department is leading a procurement exercise for an express freight service as part of the government's plans to support continuity of supply when the UK leaves the EU on 31 October.

The service is intended to deliver small parcels of medicines or medical products on a 24-hour basis, with additional provision to move larger pallet quantities on a 2- to 4-day basis. The service will be available to the whole of the UK.

While the majority of goods will be standard medicines and medical products, the express freight service can also deliver temperature-controlled products if needed.

The contract will run for 12 months, with a possible further 12-month extension.

The contract notice has been published in the [Official Journal of the European Union](#) and potential bidders have until 21 August to submit proposals. The successful provider(s) are expected to be announced in September.

The taxpayer will only be liable for up to around £4 million of the total value of the contract, but it is expected to be much less than this.

The service will provide an additional level of contingency as part of necessary preparations to leave the EU on 31 October whatever the circumstances, supported by an additional £2 billion from the Treasury across government.

This money includes £434 million to help ensure continuity of vital medicines and medical products through freight capacity, warehousing and stockpiling.

The new service will support existing plans already in place, including:

- building buffer stocks of medicines and medical products
- changing or clarifying regulatory requirements so that companies can continue to sell their products in the UK if we have no deal
- strengthening the process and resources used to deal with shortages
- procuring additional warehouse capacity
- supporting companies to improve the readiness of their logistics and supply chains to meet the new customs and border requirements for both import and export

Health Minister Chris Skidmore said:

I want to ensure that when we leave the EU at the end of October, all appropriate steps have been taken to ensure frontline services are fully prepared.

That's why we are stepping up preparations and strengthening our already extremely resilient contingency plans.

This express freight service sends a clear message to the public that our plans should ensure supply of medical goods remains uninterrupted as we leave the EU.