ONGOING RESILIENCE FOR CORONAVIRUS:

USE OF NEAR ME VIDEO CONSULTING IN PHARMACY

THIS DOCUMENT IS PRIMARILY INTENDED FOR COMMUNITY PHARMACIES IN NHS SCOTLAND

For Primary Care Pharmacists: please use the GP practice Near Me set up guidance available at: https://tec.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Near-Me-Covid19-Primary-Care-Guidance-v1.docx and the Clinical Guidance within this document

For Hospital Pharmacists: please use the outpatients Near Me set up guidance available at: https://tec.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Near-Me-Covid19-Outpatients-Guidance-v1.docx and the Clinical Guidance within this document

ACTIONS FOR HEALTH BOARD/HSCPS:

1. Ensure all community pharmacies have received this document
2. Inform all community pharmacies of any local arrangements that differ from what is described in this document
3. Support community pharmacies to be able to introduce Near Me video consulting

Near Me video consulting (powered by Attend Anywhere) can be used to reduce exposure to coronavirus by enabling patients and clinicians to consult remotely.
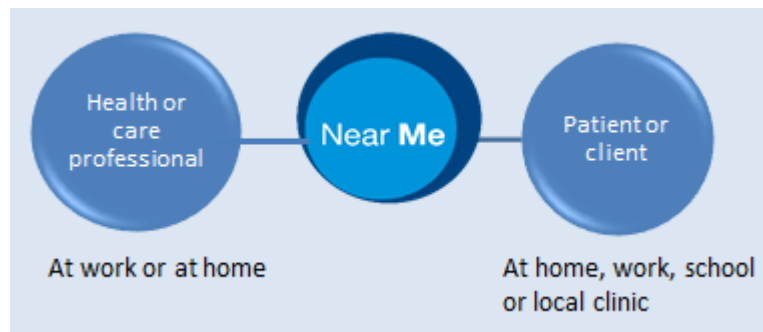
The key reasons for maximising use of Near Me are:

- **Enables physical distancing:** Near Me enables services to continue to be provided without potential exposure to COVID-19 and reduces footfall in NHS premises.

- **Delivers person centred and convenient care:** Near Me enables people to attend appointments from the location of their choice. This can reduce travel, minimise time taken off work or school, or reduce the need for carers to support.

- **Addresses environmental imperatives:** by reducing travel, Near Me improves the move towards net zero and the carbon footprint of services.

Use in pharmacy

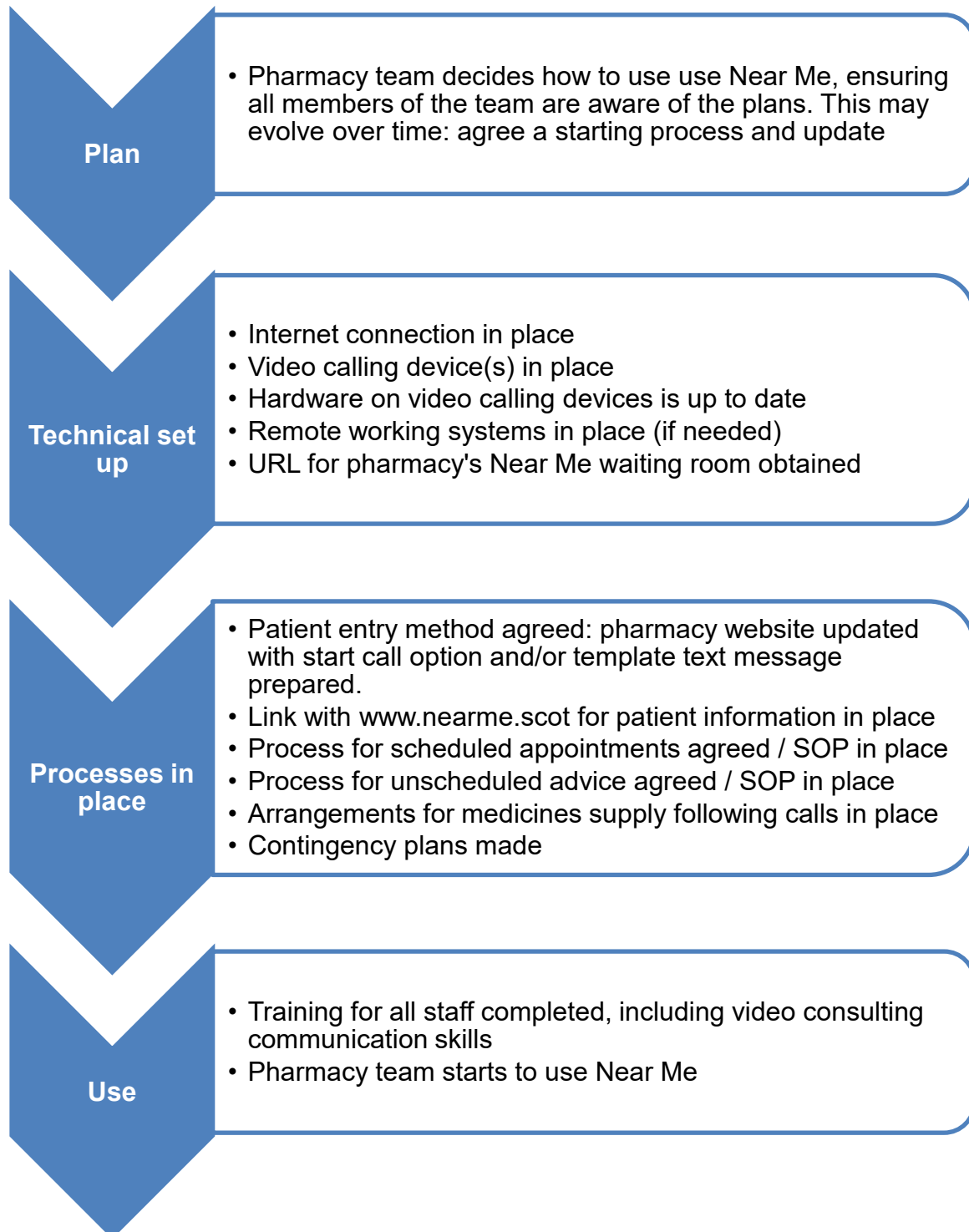In general terms, Near Me can be used by pharmacists to:

- Provide advice to a patient remotely in order to reduce potential Covid-19 spread. This may avoid the need for a patient to come into the pharmacy in person altogether, or alternatively minimise the time spent in the pharmacy (eg, to collecting pre-prepared medicines).

- Consult with patients remotely to improve access for patients. For example, for patients who have transport difficulties, have caring responsibilities at home, or find it difficult to leave work/school to attend.

- Consult with patients remotely to avoid travel for pharmacists. For example, providing specialist support to a number of locations or enabling pharmacists to work remotely such as those who are isolating due to high infection risk.

Consultations: place of Near Me

Pharmacists should decide when it is clinically appropriate to use Near Me. In some circumstances, telephone consulting will be sufficient, in others Near Me video will provide additional clinical information and improved communication with patient, and in some cases a face to face consultation will be required.

SUMMARY

The following chart summarises the actions to implement Near Me in pharmacy. Detail is provided on the following pages.

Plan

- Pharmacy team decides how to use use Near Me, ensuring all members of the team are aware of the plans. This may evolve over time: agree a starting process and update

Technical set up

- Internet connection in place
- Video calling device(s) in place
- Hardware on video calling devices is up to date
- Remote working systems in place (if needed)
- URL for pharmacy's Near Me waiting room obtained

Processes in place

- Patient entry method agreed: pharmacy website updated with start call option and/or template text message prepared.
- Link with www.nearme.scot for patient information in place
- Process for scheduled appointments agreed / SOP in place
- Process for unscheduled advice agreed / SOP in place
- Arrangements for medicines supply following calls in place
- Contingency plans made

Use

- Training for all staff completed, including video consulting communication skills
- Pharmacy team starts to use Near Me

A key part of deciding how Near Me will be used in any pharmacy setting is to determine the clinical criteria for use. The following tables provide some guidance, but the decision to use Near Me should always be made by individual pharmacists, considering both clinical factors and a pharmacist's clinical skills/area of practice.
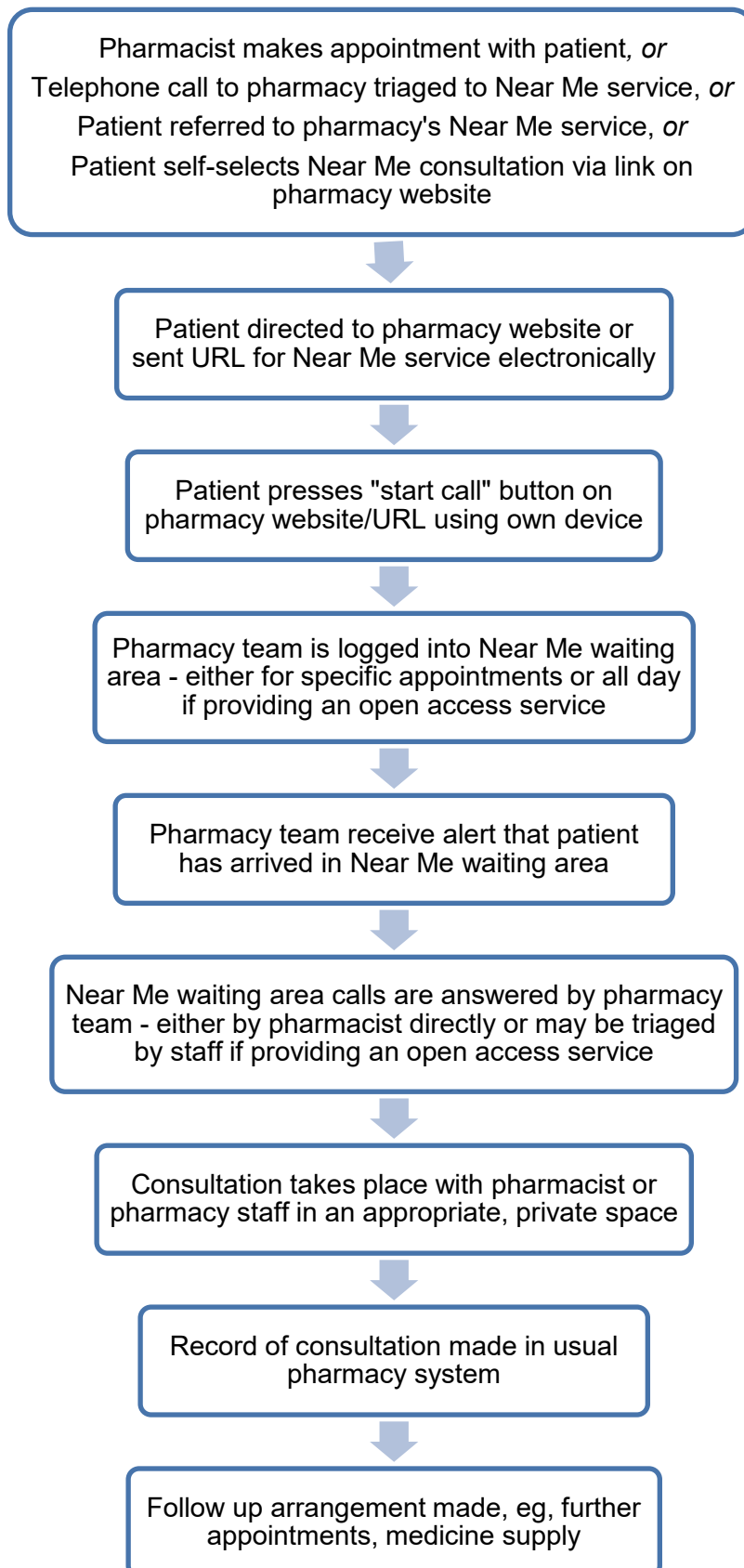
Usually appropriate for Near Me	Usually NOT appropriate for Near Me
- Advice and medicine counselling - All types of medication reviews - Minor ailments / Pharmacy First consultations, especially where examination by video provides additional clinical information - Public health service consultations (smoking cessation and sexual health) - Independent prescribing consultations (with certain limitations as detailed opposite)	- Supply of medicines - Clinical assessments, eg, checking blood pressure, carbon monoxide levels - Physical examinations, eg, lymph node palpation, otoscope use Please note the pharmacist consulting will need to use professional judgement to ascertain whether further clinical assessments and physical examination at face to face appointment is necessary to ensure safe and effective patient care.

Some examples of clinical situations when Near Me could be used are as follows. It is anticipated pharmacists may want to include Near Me within SOPs for clinical services:

Scenario	Hospital Pharmacy (HP)	Pharmacotherapy - locality pharmacist (LP)	Community Pharmacy (CP)
Scheduled	- Outpatient specialty clinic appointments, eg, Parkinson's, pain, oncology, respiratory, dermatology, rheumatology, neurology - Pre-assessment clinic for elective surgery	- Specialist clinics, eg, pain, dermatology - Medication review and polypharmacy clinics	- Specialist clinics, eg, pain, substance misuse - Common Clinical Conditions / Pharmacy First - EHC - Smoking cessation - Medicines Care & Review - See and Treat - Clinical supervision
Unscheduled	- Discharge counselling - MDT round for patient assessment and care - Medication queries/ review with LP/CP/ patient/carer	- Discharge follow-up - Communication with OPD about prescribing and on-going monitoring	- Common Clinical Conditions / Pharmacy First - EHC - Discharge follow-up
Development	- Pharmacy clinics to utilise skills of CP/LP/HP - Clinical support for CP/LP - Integrated care pathways	- Pharmacy clinics to utilise skills of CP/LP/HP - Delivery of level 3 integrated services	- Pharmacy clinics to utilise skills of CP/LP/HP - Integrated care pathways

Clinical Pathway

The following pathway is a template: it is anticipated each pharmacy team will use this to inform the creation of a SOP (or SOPs) for use of Near Me.

Pharmacist makes appointment with patient, *or*
Telephone call to pharmacy triaged to Near Me service, *or*
Patient referred to pharmacy's Near Me service, *or*
Patient self-selects Near Me consultation via link on pharmacy website

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Patient directed to pharmacy website or sent URL for Near Me service electronically

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Patient presses "start call" button on pharmacy website/URL using own device

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Pharmacy team is logged into Near Me waiting area - either for specific appointments or all day if providing an open access service

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Pharmacy team receive alert that patient has arrived in Near Me waiting area

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Near Me waiting area calls are answered by pharmacy team - either by pharmacist directly or may be triaged by staff if providing an open access service

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Consultation takes place with pharmacist or pharmacy staff in an appropriate, private space

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Record of consultation made in usual pharmacy system

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Follow up arrangement made, eg, further appointments, medicine supply

IMPLEMENTATION OF NEAR ME IN A COMMUNITY PHARMACY

Pharmacy planning	
1	Decide how Near Me will be embedded into community pharmacy processes. Ensure all members of the pharmacy team are aware of how it will work.
2	Decide whether Near Me will be used for: • Appointments, unscheduled advice or both. • Consultations with pharmacists only or with the wider pharmacy team. Refer to the template care pathway in Appendix 1 and define how Near Me will be used in your pharmacy, creating standard operating procedures (SOPs) if appropriate.
3	The decision to use Near Me is made by clinicians on an individual consultation basis. There are different factors that influence whether Near Me is suitable, including the patient's condition, anticipated examinations/procedures, and barriers to attending (including Covid-19 exposure risk). Patient acceptability also needs to be considered, as some patients may prefer a telephone call to a video call. See the general clinical guidance above which should be interpreted by pharmacists on a case by case basis.
4	Any supply of medicines either by sale or prescription that happens following a Near Me consultation must take place in accordance with all of the standard legal requirements such as the Medicines Act and Poisons Act, and in accordance with NHS contractual arrangements (eg, Minor Ailment Service).

Technical set up	
1	Check internet connection at all locations pharmacists/pharmacy staff will consult from. This check needs to happen in the specific location (pharmacy or pharmacist working at home) to determine the actual internet connectivity. It cannot be done remotely (eg, by a head office). Check: • Reliable internet connection is in place: Near Me does not require an NHS connection. • A wired broadband/WiFi connection is preferred. The alternative is a mobile data connection (4G or 5G sim). *Note there is a cost of using mobile data so sufficient data allowance must be in place.* • Ensure any internet firewall or proxy is configured to allow access to Near Me websites and protocols. Firewalls settings can be found at: https://nhs.attendanywhere.com/rc/Content/D_Articles/Network_MediaPathways.htm (account required for access). • Check connectivity at: https://nhs.attendanywhere.com/webrtctest • If you have connection problems, check internet connection speed. Use a site to check, such as: www.speedtest.net or www.broadbandspeedchecker.co.uk Minimum requirement: download 1.1Mbps, upload 0.7 Mbps, ping under 150ms If unable to reach minimum requirements, contact eHealth department at NHS board/HSCP and/or pharmacy's own eHealth/IT team.

2	Put in place video consulting equipment for pharmacists/staff: • Set up consulting room computers with webcams and speakers or add integrated screens. Consider whether to do the same for dispensary computers. • In some situations, a moveable device may be more useful: laptops, tablets or mobile phones. • Be pragmatic about using equipment you already have during a coronavirus outbreak (as supplies of webcams are limited worldwide). Information governance approval to enable use of own devices (eg, smartphones) is available at: https://www.informationgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/covid-19-information-governance-advice/ • If adding any new equipment to existing computers, ensure computer settings are correct for default microphone and speaker, and compatible with other devices in use.
3	Check hardware meets the following requirements for all devices pharmacists/staff will use for video consulting: • Computer operating Windows 7 or later, or Mac OS 10.11 or later • Tablet or mobile phone operating Android 5.1 or later, or ioS 11.4 or later, or iPadOS 13 or later • Chrome browser (version 71 or later) on computers/Android devices or Safari browser (version 11.4 or later) on Apple products (Attend Anywhere only works in these browsers). • If any are missing, consult your board/HSCP eHealth department. Updated technical specifications available at: https://nhs.attendanywhere.com/callers/Content/D_Articles/What%20you%20need%20to%20make%20a%20video%20call.htm
4	If a pharmacist is to work remotely (eg, from home): ensure appropriate access to any clinical information is in place, such as the pharmacy's PMR.
5	Request Near Me waiting area URL is set up for the pharmacy: • Either follow the local process advised by your NHS Board/HSCP. • Or fill out request form at https://www.vc.scot.nhs.uk/attendanywhere/ which will go to the national VC team. URLs will have a standard format: https://nhsattend.vc/[board]/[pharmacyname/location].

Pharmacy processes		
1		**Patient entry to the pharmacy's Near Me service:** • Decide how patients will enter the Near Me service • *Website:* the best option is a "Start video call" button on the pharmacy's website, to which the patient can be directed • *Electronic message:* patients can be sent an email or text message containing the URL for the pharmacy's Near Me service *Pharmacy website information:* • Make sure your video consultation information is clear on the website front page. • Include a page or panel titled "Video consultations by Near Me" with: • Text: "You can attend video consultations from your home or wherever is convenient by clicking on the start call button below using a device that makes video calls (like a smartphone)." • Pharmacy specific information. For example, the statement: "You need to make an appointment as normal to use the video consultation service." Or the times a patient can use the service. • "Start call" button for video calls: once your Near Me waiting area is created, log in as an administrator, go to the Cog button at the top, from the drop down menu select "Waiting Area Entry Points", click on the "send me instructions" icon for adding a waiting area entry point to your website. You will receive an email containing the script for the button. • URL link to national Near Me patient information website www.nearme.scot This includes the option for patients to make a test call in advance of the appointment and is strongly recommended If the pharmacy does not have a website, find out from the local NHS board whether an NHS board website with links for pharmacies is an option. *Electronic messaging:* The Near Me platform will be updated in summer 2020 to include the functionality to text patients directly from within the platform. *Paper and verbal: not recommended* Sending letters, paper leaflets or verbally giving the Near Me start call button URL for patients to manually enter into their device is not recommended. This is because all Near Me start call URLs begin with the same address (https://nhsattend.vc/): manual entry is associated with typing errors and also the auto-complete function taking the patient to the wrong waiting area.	
2		If providing Near Me appointments: • Decide how appointments should be booked and recorded. • Define how patients will contact the pharmacy to make an appointment. • Ensure patients are given information about how to attend. This would usually be referring to the pharmacy website or sending a text message/email (see above). • Decide how the Near Me waiting area will be monitored to see the patient arriving for the appointment.	

3	If providing unscheduled advice by Near Me:
	• Decide how to inform patients that the service is available (eg, website, social media).
	• Ensure patient information clearly states how patients should use the Near Me service (eg, the times the service is available, what services can be provided by video).
	• Decide how unscheduled consulting will be managed, for example:
	   ○ Patients telephone first, and are then directed to Near Me when appropriate.
	   ○ Or: Each Near Me call is answered by a defined staff member(s) who can refer to a pharmacist where needed.

4	Put in place a contingency plan for Near Me calls not working – either due to patients being unable to work it or an internet failure: • Near Me call failures will happen if patients are not familiar with video calling technology and do not have a reliable internet connection. Therefore, have a clear plan in place for failures. • This would normally be the patient telephoning the pharmacy to swap to a telephone or face to face consultation. Ensure the patient knows the telephone number to call. Where a video consultation is clinically necessary (ie, to avoid transmission of the virus) and the patient has technical issues, contact the National VC Team and log a call on the patient's behalf. Email vc.support@nhs.net or call on 01224 816666. The VC team will contact the patient directly and provide best efforts technical support during working hours, 8am-6pm Monday to Friday.
5	Administrative functions: • Identify who within the pharmacy team will have administrative rights for the Near Me waiting area. • This will enable them to add and remove Near Me providers (eg, locums), change the waiting area opening hours and messages to patients. It is crucial that any temporary providers (eg, locums) are removed from the waiting area when no longer appropriate. • Administrator training is available via the national VC team website https://www.vc.scot.nhs.uk/attendanywhere/

Using Near Me	
1	Ensure all staff receive training on how to use the underlying video consulting platform (Attend Anywhere) so they can use it themselves and/or explain it to a patient, either: • See the resources available from NES on the Turas platform including video consulting communication skills at: https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/28943/coronavirus-covid-19/remote-consulting • Watch the training video produced by the national VC team, available via https://www.vc.scot.nhs.uk/attendanywhere/ or alternatively this film on YouTube https://youtu.be/6IzAg0SHKFo (also linked from Turas page). • If available, access training locally via NHS board/HSCP. Ensure all Near Me users understand the need to consult from a confidential space with good lighting.

2	Prior to the consultation, ensure you have: • Video consulting equipment • Near Me username and password • Provide the patient with the URL for where to attend their Near Me appointment (either the pharmacy website or URL sent electronically) and the patient information website https://nearme.scot • Access to the patient's clinical information, eg, pharmacy's PMR • Any specific documentation for the consultation, eg, medication review template
3	At the time of the consultation: • Log into Near Me at https://nhs.attendanywhere.com/ • Check equipment works before starting the clinic (using "test my equipment" button in the waiting area) • Monitor the waiting area for the patient arriving • Open consultation, check the patient's identity and confirm they are in a location where they are comfortable to consult from (eg, confidential) • Consult as normal • Close the consultation with clear information for the patient about what happens next, especially how/when the patient can collect medicines
4	After the consultation: • Decide if you need to make a clinical record of the consultation in the appropriate location (eg, PMR) • Arrange for any medicines required by the patient to be prepared in advance of the patient coming to the pharmacy and stored/labelled appropriately so other members of the team are aware that advice has been provided remotely • Arrange for any prescriptions required by the patient to be prepared and supplied to the patient • Arrange for any follow up required, eg, patient coming to the pharmacy for an in-person examination, referral to another healthcare professional

1. Near Me implementation guidance in multiple care settings (via TEC): https://tec.scot/digital-health-and-care-in-scotland/video-enabled-health-and-care/covid-19-implementing-near-me/

2. Training on Near Me video consulting (via NHS Education for Scotland): https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/28943/coronavirus-covid-19/remote-consulting

3. Patient information: https://nearme.scot

4. Additional resources on video consulting: https://tec.scot/covid-19-video-enabled-services/

5. Posters for pharmacy walls

Quickstart poster.pdf

Call Screen Poster.pdf

Specialty guidance authorised by:

Scottish Government Near Me Team (Digital Directorate) and Pharmacy & Medicines Division

It was produced with the help of 44 community pharmacies and NHS board pharmacy teams who tested Near Me in June 2020. With thanks to all involved in NHS Tayside, NHS Dumfries & Galloway, NHS Forth Valley and NHS Highland.

Guidance endorsed by:

ROYAL PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY Scotland

Community Pharmacy Scotland

This guidance will be reviewed in December 2020

Contact details for Near Me:

For technical queries:
https://www.vc.scot.nhs.uk/attendanywhere/

For process and set-up queries:
In the first instance, please contact the Near Me Lead or Community Pharmacy IM&T facilitator in your local NHS Board/HSCP