



Pharmaceutical Services, 2 Franklin Street, Belfast BT2 8DQ  
Telephone No. 028 95 363364

To: All Community Pharmacists

31 July 2019

Dear colleague

### **Update on Cannon Hygiene Collections**

#### **Background**

Contractors will be aware that there has been significant disruption to routine collection of 22 Litre Pharma (purple-lidded) waste bins by Cannon Hygiene over the past few months.

This has arisen due to the fact that there is currently very limited incinerator capacity within the UK, which has been compounded by the recent collapse of a waste company in Scotland. Additional volumes of waste have needed to be absorbed by the remaining industry, UK wide.

#### **Current NI Situation**

This current pressure has impacted on the quantity and frequency of purple lidded waste removed from Cannon Hygiene's premises in NI; as a result this has had a knock-on impact on Cannon's capacity to collect purple lidded units from Community Pharmacies in line with their usual collection schedule. Cannon, under license from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), cannot breach the quantity of waste they are permitted to hold on their Belfast site.

Cannon have been proactively seeking alternative incineration routes with alternative providers to ensure they can continue to collect the containers. Cannon have provisionally secured an alternative incineration disposal route which should allow collections **to resume to the normal schedule from week commencing 29<sup>th</sup> July 2019**. A driver has also been allocated to revisit pharmacies who have experienced missed collections of purple lidded units as a result of the recent disruption.



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It should be noted however that, until the pressure which is being felt across the industry, UK wide, is relieved, it cannot be guaranteed that further disruption to the collection of purple lidded units will not occur. Cannon are continuing to work across multiple agencies to ensure that further disruption to routine collections is minimised.

### **Going Forward**

It is appreciated that pharmacies have limited storage space on their premises to hold the containers which have been returned from the public. Pharmacies are requested to continue to accept containers from the public and **should contact Cannon Hygiene Limited via the following telephone number 0330 058 0854 if they require an urgent collection of purple lidded units due to storage restraints.**

*The collection of 22L Sharps (orange lidded) units has not been impacted and will continue as normal, as this waste is currently disposed of via alternative treatment.*

### **Action for Pharmacy Contractors**

Ensure that purple lidded units are used appropriately; they are **not** to be used for the disposal of non-medicinal waste (such as **food supplements/baby milk products**), nor are they to be used for the disposal of out-of-date pharmacy stock, they are solely for the disposal of patient-returned medicines.