

SECURITY ADVICE FOR PHARMACIES

ADVICE FOR PHARMACIES DURING COVID19

The Metropolitan Police Service is committed to working with pharmacies to protect their business and prevent crime. We recognise this will be an anxious time so here is a summary of security advice which provides the steps you can take to protect your staff and business.

Further Advice can be sought from the National Business Crime Centre
<https://nbcc.police.uk/guidance>

The following advice must be read in conjunction with the Home Office security guidance document for existing or prospective Controlled Drug Licensees

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-security-guidance-for-controlled-drug-suppliers>

- Do not divulge when deliveries are expected.
- Place temporary barriers on open plan counters to restrict access.
- Remove identification lanyards when leaving the premises and secure computer log in cards.
- Encourage staff to positively engage with customers, promote social distancing and vigilance.
- Prepare storage and sorting areas in advance of deliveries.
- Maintain Public & Private area separation, use signs to set rules and lock unused rooms.
- Use planned opening and closing procedures. When closed, utilise existing security to its full effect.
- Seek advice from Met Police or Master Locksmith Association.

It is important that you or your staff keep controlled drugs out of the sight of counter areas and do not inadvertently draw attention to additional quantities of drugs on the premises.

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Staff - Train, support and talk to your staff about the information in this document

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Signage - set clear rules and make it clear which are staff only areas

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Take a note of every incident no matter how small and report crime to the police

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Advise staff to lock unused rooms and be vigilant

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Assess the security of your premises, inside and out and have an up-to-date premises security risk assessment

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Follow pre planned open & close routines

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You can seek further advice from the Master Locksmith Association and Metropolitan Police Service

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Ensure drugs are locked away in a security rated cabinet and behind several layers of security.

WELL BEING OF STAFF

Brief your staff about the contents of this document emphasising the importance of not inadvertently drawing attention that additional quantities of controlled drugs may be being kept on the premises or when deliveries are expected.

The safety and wellbeing of staff is paramount. Violence or abuse against staff is never acceptable and should not be tolerated. If you've witnessed, or have been the victim of a crime please report it, as it will help Police to bring the offender to justice, prevent further crime and keep people safe.

Always trust your instincts and maximise the distance between you and anyone who is aggressive. Once the person has left the premises, record a description and report this to police as soon as possible. In an emergency always call 999.

Keeping a written log of suspicious activity is invaluable to the police in the event of a crime taking place.

Ask your staff to help identify vulnerabilities of the business, they may have a different perspective of the potential risks.

Keep an up-to-date record of staff contact details and their nominated point of contact.

SECURITY OF PREMISES

To identify the risks to your business premises it is a good idea to think about the kind of incidents you may have experienced in the past. Walk around the inside and outside your premises to identify where your vulnerabilities are. The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime have produced a guide on how to carry out a security self-assessment:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/safe_spaces_self-accreditation_scheme_-_survey_tool.pdf

Test your locks, shutters, grilles, windows and doors are working properly. If they are not working properly get them repaired or replaced by an approved contractor who uses Police accredited products. A list of police approved companies can be found here:

<https://www.securedbydesign.com/member-companies/accredited-product-search>

As you walk around your store think about where your most secure area is. Then consider what additional security measures could be introduced. For example: fitting additional locks to existing doors, as adding a second lock will improve the resistance of the door and will make it harder for someone to break in to. There are products available which can be fitted to the door frame (London Bar) and hinges (Birmingham Bar), to reinforce them. Whilst a professionally installed and maintained alarm is desirable, there are also wired and non-wired audible alarms and sensors which can be fitted to doors and windows.

Roof lights and windows can be vulnerable points. Openings can be reinforced by fitting additional locks and supplemented with audible alarm sensors and glazing can be reinforced using a laminate film to coat the inner side of the glass. There are various types of film offering different levels of security.

Ensure internal and external lights are working and replace any bulbs. If you are considering installing external lighting then dawn till dusk system is recommended.

ALARMS & CCTV

If a burglar or panic alarm is fitted, it should be tested regularly so you can be confident you will get an appropriate response when necessary. There are many types of professionally fitted alarm options available including some that are remotely monitored. If you want to have an alarm installed, use a company registered with the National Security Inspectorate (NSI) formally NACOSS or SSAIB.

CCTV systems can act as a deterrent to crime and may assist in the investigation and prosecution in the event of an incident. It is important staff know how to operate the equipment as a delay could hold up an investigation.

If you have CCTV cameras installed, check the cameras are working, the lenses are clean and are not obstructed by merchandise or anything else. The cameras should be positioned on your vulnerable areas and stock.

CCTV cameras should provide good quality images and positioned to cover as much of the store as possible, including the area in which your drugs are stored.

We recommend CCTV systems should be professionally installed and serviced regularly however, there are also off the shelf CCTV systems which can be viewed remotely using a mobile phone app and allow two-way communication using a speaker. The cameras are triggered by movement sensors alerting you of a breaking in, so you can call police. Some systems offer cloud based storage making it an attractive short term, cost-effective DIY solution. We recommend changing default passwords to protect your personal data. For more information about device and cyber security visit:

<https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fa/fraud/online-fraud/cyber-crime-fraud/>

ENTRANCE POINTS

If there are multiple entrance points in to your premises during opening hours, consider if any of these can be restricted or closed off. Being able to control entrance doors, electronically or manually, allows you to have control of who can enter your store.

COMMUNICATION

Always have a means of communication with you, such as a mobile phone, two-way radio or a panic alarm. This equipment is useless unless it is regularly tested, turned on and is worn or with you at all times. Some areas of London operate a radio scheme as part of a Business Crime Reduction Partnership or Business Improvement District. You can find out if there is one in your area here:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/business-and-economy/supporting-business/about-business-improvement-districts>

PUBLIC vs PRIVATE

Keep doors to private areas or rooms, including those used for consultations, locked when they are not in use. Consider the benefits of a simple door contact alarm, to cabinets or doors as they will sound if unexpectedly opened or not shut properly.

Display signs to make it clear which areas are private and are off limits to customers.

Keep the main desk or counter area free of personal belongings or valuables including mobile phones. Lock them away, or keep them out of sight.

S T A Y S A F E

BLIND SPOTS

Try to avoid creating blind spots on the shop floor. Remove any obstructions or reposition merchandise which may prevent your staff having a clear view around the shop, entrance door and if possible, outside your premises.

If you still have blind spots, is there is anything you can do to improve these areas such as repositioning a CCTV camera to cover it? Alternatively, can you temporarily seal the area off from the public?

Adding security mirrors will enable your staff to have more visibility around the store and may reduce blind spots.

VULNERABLE AREAS

Ask your staff to pay extra attention to any areas of the shop you have identified as vulnerable, especially where high value or attractive stock is displayed. Alternatively, move the stock to another location, or reduce the amount of stock you keep on open display.

Never attempt to lock a shoplifter in the shop. This is dangerous.

Call the Police.

WORKING LATE

Stay safe when you are working late - always keep in constant communication with someone who knows where you are.

If you are the only person working, stay in touch with a colleague, your boss, or family members so they are aware of where you are and that you are safe.

If there is security staff on duty, let them know that you are in the building. You can also ask them to check on you every so often.

CUSTOMERS & DELIVERIES

Restricting the number of customers you allow into your premises is important and your staff will have a key role in managing this. Some businesses allow a limited number of customers in at a time to maintain social distancing and protect staff.

Placing a sign on the entrance door informing customers that you are operating a policy of restricting access will reduce customer frustration. If you have the ability to lock the door remotely or manually this too will help you control entry in to your premises.

Remember criminals and opportunist thieves are sophisticated in their ability to deceive staff. Remain alert and try not to stereotype what a criminal looks like, as they can take any appearance.

Be mindful of criminal distraction techniques, especially during deliveries.

In advance of deliveries try to prepare storage areas by relocating any stock that does not need to be within the secure storage area or are deemed lower risk.

Keep the aisles or approach to the storage area clutter free allowing enough space for the delivery storage containers to be quickly stacked away safely out of public view.

Keep the inventory or delivery paperwork separately, so you can accurately report any items to the police if they are stolen.

When dispensing the controlled drug do this out of public view so the patient doesn't see where you are getting it from.

Where possible ensure the door to the storage area is not left open apart from when entering and then when exiting the space

Don't be afraid close to the public for a few minutes if you need to, just remember place a note on the door for customers.

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OPENING & CLOSING

Opening and closing the shop presents risks, so adapt your procedure. Stay alert and try to have a minimum of two members of staff at opening and closing times. Agree a memorable code word or signal to alert each other of a potential hazard. Trust your instincts and don't put yourself in danger call 999.

Ensure any drugs or high-risk medication is locked in a security rated safe which is either bolted to the floor or secured to the wall. If there is not sufficient storage space within the safe, any excess controlled drugs should be stored out of view and if possible in another lockable cupboard, cabinet or a locked room. The more layers of security you create between where the drugs are stored, the more difficult you will make the drugs to steal.

Any additional measures you can take to introduce more layers or barriers to protect your stock will help. For example; by storing fewer quantities together in the same place you are potentially reducing the volume of loss. If they can be hidden or disguised then it will make it harder for the criminal to find.

Leaving the lights on will maximise visibility throughout the shop from the outside during the hours of darkness.

Keys and other valuables should be locked away or out of sight.

Always set the alarm lock-up and leave the building secure. In addition to products mentioned earlier in this document there is another portable device which can be used to wedge any inward opening door shut. This device is called a Door Jammer and will make it harder for the door to be forced open:

<https://www.securedbydesign.com/about-us/news/doorjammer-secures-police-accreditation>

SECURED BY DESIGN

If you are interested in upgrading the security in your premises, all Police approved products and services including reputable CCTV installers can be found on the Secured by Design website:

<https://www.securedbydesign.com/>

CONTACT US

If you have any specific questions about your security then please let us know. To report a crime call 101 and in an emergency dial 999.

Businesscrime.mailbox@met.pnn.police.uk

REMAIN VIGILANT AND REPORT ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS - IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 999

S T A Y S A F E