



Dear Colleague

LAUNCH OF VIDEO REMOTE INTERPRETING (VRI) PILOT: COMMUNITY PHARMACY

Summary

1. This Circular is to advise community pharmacy teams of a Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) pilot which is being launched in community pharmacy settings. The pilot requires no additional equipment as a British Sign Language (BSL) user will use their own mobile phone.

2. The pilot will be announced in September with a launch date of 5th October 2026.

Background

3. The Scottish Government funds a service for BSL users called 'Contact Scotland BSL'. This is a video-based interpreter system for BSL users and the hearing person they wish to communicate with, when they are in the same location. This system provides on-demand interpretation with a skilled BSL interpreter via video call, allowing the BSL user and a member of the pharmacy team to communicate.

4. The pilot forms part of Scottish Government's wider commitment to improving accessibility and reducing health inequalities. Community pharmacy has been identified as a suitable test environment for users to test the service in, allowing people who use BSL to access pharmacy services independently and effectively.

5. The app-based technology introduces a VRI solution that enables pharmacy teams to connect with a BSL interpreter via a secure video link. To initiate a VRI call, the BSL user will have to use their phone to scan the dedicated QR code within the poster asset attached at **Annex A**. A step-by-step guide is also provided at **Annex B**.

6. The app can be used to support routine pharmacy interactions and consultations. There are no associated costs to a community pharmacy participating in the pilot.

21 September 2026

Addresses

For action

Chief Executives, NHS Boards

For information

NHS Directors of Pharmacy
Director of Practitioner
Services, PSDS

Enquiries to:

Pharmacy, Medicines and
Therapeutics Division

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Email:
PharmacyTeam@gov.scot

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7. The content of this Circular has been agreed with Community Pharmacy Scotland.

Action

8. Community pharmacy teams are asked to promote the availability of the service by displaying the provided poster asset (colour printing not required).

9. Provide feedback on their experiences at the end of the pilot.

Further Information

10. If you have any questions regarding the pilot, please contact BOSTeam@gov.scot.

Yours sincerely,



Alison Strath

Chief Pharmaceutical Officer
Pharmacy & Medicines Division

Annex A - Poster for display

Delivered by  Sign Solutions on behalf of  Scottish Government
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Video Remote Interpreting is available here with the help of



Download the app



App Store



Google Play



Annex B - Step-by-step guide



Contact Scotland BSL is Scotland's national British Sign Language video interpreting service.



Use in person through our Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) service

Step by step guide to initiate VRI call



- Scan the QR code using your camera app
- Type the pharmacy/chemist name only (you do not need the full address)
- Choose your region
- Press 'Connect'.

Important: The pharmacist/ chemist may need to use your phone to type information during the call.



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