Public Services Delivery
Scotland

National Procurement **Sitrep**

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13th April 2026
Middle East Conflict Impact Assessment

Overall RAG Status: GREEN	Highlights/Reasons for RAG Status
Middle East Conflict Impact Assessment	• Overall RAG status is Green, noting there remains continued risk and uncertainties on the overall global situation. • National Procurement continue to engage across their supplier network to assess any immediate, medium and long-term impacts from the crisis. • In addition to the ongoing supplier activity, NP are liaising with health boards on any risks to direct supply as well as coordinating with DHSC and NSDR (National Supply Disruption Response) teams to provide full national engagement.

Status by Category

1. National Procurement (Strategic Sourcing)

Several requests have been received across Category areas in relation to fuel surcharge requests and these are being managed in line with governance and contract terms and conditions. Food supplies are being monitored closely for any volatility in price points.

Helium supply risk previously highlighted remains, with Qatar accounting for one third of global helium production. Again, whilst the UK does not directly source helium from Qatar, there is potential for indirect global market pressure should disruption persist. The primary NHSS dependency is helium for MRI scanners; other medical uses are limited and specialist. Suppliers continue to indicate no immediate risk to supply in UK, with reserves in place.

Global shipping disruption continues to be monitored but again no impact has been reported regarding product availability; although the pressure on freight and landed costs is coming into sharper focus as forward bookings are made within the network.

Imported medical devices, consumables and equipment with Asia–Europe supply routes. DHSC and NP assessments confirm availability risk remains low. Majority of shipping already routing via alternative routes. NP continues horizon scanning and supplier engagement to monitor cost impacts.

Supplier cyber security risk associated with geopolitical instability. No current service disruption, risk is indirect and precautionary. Recent disruptions are now fully resolved with activity now back to a normal fulfilment footing. NP continues to proactively seek assurance from key suppliers on cyber resilience as part of wider geopolitical risk engagement process.

2. National Procurement (Medicines)

DHSC are leading on medicines supply resilience at UK level. They previously advised that the UK has no direct dependencies on Iran and only limited dependencies on other Middle Eastern countries aside from Israel. A small number of products may pose vulnerability due to their sole-supplier status; the DHSC is engaging with companies and closely monitoring. There is still no evidence of a reduction in the supply of medicines to Scotland due to challenges in the Middle East but on the 16th April, DHSC updated their standard communication lines in recognition that they are beginning to see a small number of disruptions.

Updated Lines: "We are monitoring the situation closely and there is currently very limited disruption to medical product supply from the conflict in the Middle East. We have robust measures in place to manage disruption across the health and social care sector to protect patients, including holding buffer stocks and the procurement of alternative products where necessary. We will continue working closely with industry partners to help ensure the continued supply of medical products".

The Healthcare Distribution Authorisation, the pharmaceutical wholesaler trade body, has signalled that distributors may begin to introduce fuel surcharges; there has been two confirmed examples of this, Genetech and VWR. Both are small distributors so negligible financial impact.

There have been a small number of examples of pharmaceutical suppliers reviewing prices linked to cost pressures related to energy and raw material inputs. The NHS Pharmaceutical Specials Service (NHS Tayside) that hosts a medicines compounding unit has reported a handful of examples of manufacturers of raw materials increasing costs. There has been an example of a supplier terminating the secondary care supply contract for a high-volume product line (Paracetamol 500mg Tablets (32)) citing cost pressures due to problems in the Middle East; this will have a cost pressure for Boards but it not expected to impact on supply.

The pharmaceutical supply chain is maintained by commercial suppliers external to the NHS. Guidance continues to be requested from SG regarding appropriate actions for fuel shortage preparedness. Commercial suppliers have expressed a need for communication from SG outlining recommended measures for scenario planning, including the identification of priority suppliers.

3. National Procurement (National Distribution Service)

Fulfilment rates for health boards continue to remain above 99% and have been since the start of the conflict. Critical product lines continue to be tracked to ensure strong stock levels, supported by forward planning and ordering to meet demand.

As previously advised, all 400 NDS suppliers were requested to provide ongoing heatmap reports on emerging risks and any concerns about supply pipelines and fulfilment, including any risks associated with cyber security and potential disruption to logistics operations.

Feedback continues to remain positive; no immediate risks or concerns being identified. Suppliers are maintaining inbound logistics and holding contingency stock at UK and European centres where necessary, ensuring product availability stays at the required levels.

Ongoing collaboration with DHSC and NSDR is being maintained to guarantee comprehensive awareness of any potential threats or risks related to supply disruptions.

Earlier this week, supplier shipments from the Republic of Ireland were delayed due to fuel protests, which led to a 24-hour postponement in deliveries. Stock fulfilment has since been completed. A review with suppliers in the region was conducted, and assurances have been received regarding contingent arrangements to mitigate the impact of any future inbound transport delays.

We have been informed of anticipated delivery disruptions resulting from fuel protests in Scotland and across the United Kingdom, expected to occur from Wednesday, 15 April, through Friday, 17 April. These events are likely to impact several major road networks, with demonstrations—including blockades and slow-moving convoys—scheduled to begin at 12:00 pm today (Wednesday, 15 April). Police Scotland and relevant authorities are actively monitoring the situation and will deploy resources as required; nonetheless, delays are anticipated.

Accordingly, we have communicated with health boards and suppliers throughout our network to provide notice of possible disruption, outline potential impacts on service delivery, and review and establish contingency measures. Given the dynamic nature of this situation, we will continue to monitor developments closely.

4. Health Boards

All health boards continue to monitor activities not associated with National Procurement framework or National Distribution Service provision.

Current feedback confirms minimal risk and no urgent issues regarding any service or goods provision.

The established NP forums with boards of National Efficiency Operational Group (NEOG), and the Category Managers Collaboration Group (CMCG), are continuing to be leveraged to gather input from boards, enabling prompt access to support and provide resilience measures.

Fuel surcharge notifications have been presented at board level and are being appropriately addressed. Where applicable, these matters are combined with

National Procurement, and discussions are underway regarding mitigation strategies to offset potential charges.

Board members are seeking access to the Chief Executive's letter from the Scottish Government regarding the crisis and national contingency support requirements.

5. Commercial

Commercial pressures, notably fuel surcharges within the supplier network, persist. Activities adhere to established governance frameworks and contractual obligations. The Central Legal Office is currently evaluating force majeure submissions, with particular attention to commodities such as nitrile gloves. In certain instances, open-book costing arrangements have been implemented to facilitate well-informed decision making in response to shifting market dynamics. NP continues to monitor commercial impacts through continuous supplier management activities.

Summary

The overall position continues to remain stable, and established processes ensures that prompt engagement and effective collaboration is ready should any disruption occur.

Fuel protest impacts will be monitored, and contingency plans implemented to maintain service continuity. Health boards keep several days' stock of critical components locally for immediate resilience.

Active supplier engagement and risk assessment profiling is continuing across the product and service portfolio.

Next steps

Continue to review and evaluate any identified risks or issues, and implement contingency measures as needed to maintain service continuity.

Date of next report: Wed 22nd April 26

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