



Pharmacy Matters *extra*

Managed Repeats

Managed repeat services have been introduced by a number of pharmacies in Cambridgeshire where the pharmacy manages the process of ordering repeat medications on behalf of their patient. The repeat slips are held at the pharmacy and taken to the practice by the pharmacy in a timely manner to ensure the repeats are ordered at the times specified by that practice. Community Pharmacy staff should clarify issues with repeat ordering with patients or their representatives directly at the point of ordering to avoid issues of items being ordered incorrectly.

However concerns have been raised about such systems from patients and practices including:

- An increase in medications being ordered that are not needed.
- Items ordered on a repeat slip that is held in the pharmacy for several weeks before being submitted to a practice may have been subsequently stopped or amended by the prescriber.
- Information on the repeat slips e.g. alerts, flu vaccinations; practice news etc may not reach the patient.

Joint Position Statement

Following the above concerns NHS Cambridgeshire (NHSC), the Local Pharmaceutical Committee and the Local Medical Committee have reviewed guidance and SOPs to produce this summary of good practice.

Characteristics of a Good Managed Repeat Service

- All repeat requests are directed by the patient or their representative and the pharmacy are working under this direction. The pharmacy has the written consent of the patient to be part of the service. Each repeat slip is completed and is signed and dated by the patient/representative and NOT by the pharmacy.
- The pharmacy confirms with the patient the items selected and summarises the total number requested.
- The pharmacy will clarify any similar sounding drugs, dosage forms and strengths.
- Prescriptions can be synchronised to reduce the number of repeat prescription forms ordered.
- The pharmacy will review the repeat prescription to confirm that what has been prescribed matches the requests ordered by the patient or representative. Any discrepancies between the repeats requested and the items on the repeat prescription will be discussed with the prescriber and/or the patient/representative so these can be addressed before the prescription is collected.
- At prescription collection, the pharmacy will confirm with the patient or their representative that all items dispensed are still needed within guidelines to maintain confidentiality. If any item is confirmed as not required, the prescription will be annotated as "not dispensed" and the medication returned to stock as appropriate. Items identified from managed repeat systems would not be eligible for payments in the NHSC "Not Dispensed scheme".
- All messages included on repeat slips are transferred to patients by written and verbal communication.
- This service **MUST NOT CREATE WASTE** for the health service through inappropriate supply of medicines to patients.

Below is a list of suggested activities that pharmacies and practices could each do to make access to appropriate repeat medications a simpler, safer and easier process.

Practices

- Ask to see a pharmacy SOP on their managed repeat system and see how it aligns itself to the practice repeat prescribing policy.
- Clarify with the pharmacy their procedures to confirm that items ordered are needed by the patient and when these orders are taken.
- Regularly review and update repeat medications.
- Consider putting patients with stable medication regimes on to the NHS repeat dispensing service.
- The [National Prescribing Centre](#) in England has published several guides that may be useful for practices to manage their repeat prescribing:
 - *Saving time, helping patients: A good practice guide to quality repeat prescribing,*
 - *Repeat Prescribing Service Improvement Guide,*
 - *Dispensing with repeats.*

Pharmacies

- Engage with the practice to show, how the managed repeat service will be operated locally.
- Ensure that SOPs have a requirement that items are ordered only at the explicit request of the patient.
- Engage with patients to confirm that items ordered are those that the patient needs for the next dispensing. Ensure that this process is regularly recorded.
- Confirm with the patient that they understand the managed repeat system, what it does and what it does not do before asking them to join it.
- Confirm with patients that they need all the items dispensed before handing out their medications.