



In August 2025 we help a Patient Participation Group (PPG) meeting themed on repeat medications and prescriptions. We thought it would be helpful to share some of the queries and highlight how prescriptions are processed and what you can expect from the practice when ordering your medication.



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From 20th October – patients will **no longer** be able to request acute or repeat prescriptions using the prioryCARE form.

This is to reduce the risk of error (e.g. when free texting medication requests). On SystmOnline and NHSapp, you need to tick a specific item to request it. This is important for patient safety and also assists our Prescription Admin team to process requests efficiently.

HOW TO REQUEST MEDS

You can request your repeat prescriptions in a variety of ways either online or if you do not have online access you can use the prescription boxes based at our reception desks or post us your request if easier.

- Please ensure paper requests are legible and include your name and date of birth or use the repeat slip attached to your prescription.
- You can no longer use the prescription phone line to request repeat prescriptions. This is due to the risk of transcription errors between the patient (or representative) and the person taking the call/listening to the voicemail message. Patient safety is of paramount importance to us and hence the need for this change.

Our two preferred options for medication requests:

- **NHS App:** easily request repeat prescriptions 24/7 or update your nominated pharmacy.
- **SystmOnline:** This is a very convenient way of managing your prescriptions 24/7, you need to be registered for this service. You can bookmark/favourite the SystmOnline website for ease of access in the future.

If you want to request a medication you have never had before or it has been at least a year since you last had it issued, we may direct you to arrange an appointment with a member of the clinical team to discuss this further.

Mondays are an extremely busy day for our prescription admin team. They will be processing prescription requests from the weekend so please bear with us.

REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS

- Allow the practice at least **5 working days** to process your repeat request. Some community pharmacies also have a 2–7 day turnaround.
- We allow you to request most medications a week before due (apart from high risk drugs such as opioids, DMARDS)
- It can take up to **28 days** to process letters and medication changes from the hospital (after a clinic or admission). There is an agreement with the hospital that any urgent medication needed prior to this will be supplied by them.
- We do not always add acute medications from letters e.g pain killers as usually the hospital give you enough to last for the expected recovery time. If you would like to discuss a request for more of these, we may arrange a call with a pharmacist or GP
- Over the last year, we have been encouraging patients to have 2 monthly repeat prescriptions for long term and lower risk medications. We are supporting patients to move to **56 days medications** where possible (some exceptions). This means you spend less time each year requesting your medication and may reduce your costs.
- The prescription admin team are keen to **sync repeat medications** – it can be frustrating for patients to request different medications 2–3 times across the month. Get in touch to arrange a review if you would like to bring your request date in line so you only request medications once every month or two.
- We try to pre-empt your **medication reviews** either at month 5 or 11, depending on whether you have annual or 6 monthly reviews. This reduces the chance you will have problems requesting your medication.

The NHS app has many functions that assist you with prescriptions, [this website](#) contains lots of useful information. We also hold regular NHSapp sessions in surgery where we can get you set up, registered and confident with the NHSapp. Contact us if you are keen to hear about the next one!

Requesting repeat medication

it is quick and easy to request your medication and you can do this any time of day – go to the homepage or services page and select “Request repeat prescriptions”. Sometimes the repeat medication is not visible on your NHS app, this is likely due to the medication being due a review. It has not been removed from your repeats, please contact the surgery if you are unable to request one of your usual medications and we can arrange a review.

Change your nominated pharmacy

When you request a prescription online, you can have your prescription sent electronically to a pharmacy of your choice. This is called choosing a pharmacy (it's also known as nominating a pharmacy).

Once you choose a pharmacy:

- you'll no longer need to collect paper prescriptions from your GP surgery
- your chosen pharmacy will receive your prescriptions until you change or remove it

If you prefer to use an online-only pharmacy, which sends your prescriptions to you in the post, you must register with them through their website or contact them directly. If you do not choose a pharmacy, you can collect your medicines using the prescription barcode in the NHS App from any pharmacy.

Tracking your prescription

In May 2025, this service launched – it helps patients see if their prescription has been processed and dispensed at their pharmacy. It is not available to everyone at the moment but will be expanded across pharmacies in England within the next 6-12 months. See [this link](#) for more information.

If you need to request medication for your child, relative or someone you care for, it can feel confusing how to do this.

Adult SystmOnline Access

- If you would like to grant a carer/relative access, both the patient and carer need to be registered with the practice
- We will ask for both to provide ID and the patient to provide a signed letter consenting to the individual having access to their medical records.
- Our clinical/safeguarding team will review the request and approve if appropriate and safe to do so.

Child SystmOnline Access

- From birth to 11th birthday, parents can apply for full SystmOne online access – you will be asked to complete some paperwork and provide ID at one of our reception desks. Both parent and child need to be registered with the practice.
- On the child's 11th birthday, online access is turned off. The practice may allow the parent access to medication requests and appointment booking. This is reviewed by the clinical and safeguarding team, to ensure appropriate and consent obtained from parent and child.
- On the child's 16th birthday, parent access is removed as the patient is deemed to be competent to have access to their own medical records.

Child NHSapp

- A child can sign up for their own NHSapp account at the age of 13.

eRD

If you or someone you care for uses the same medicines regularly, you may be able to benefit from electronic repeat dispensing (eRD). It was first introduced in 2009 and is a method of dispensing prescriptions electronically. It means that patients who regularly get the same medicine do not need to request their medication online or ant the practice every time they need a repeat prescription.

Using eRD, practices can issue up to 12 months' worth of regular prescriptions, which can be stored securely on the NHS database, so they are ready at the pharmacy each time a patient needs them.

You simply collect your regular medication from your usual pharmacy each month without actually having to order it.

To enable electronic dispensing you need to have a nominated pharmacy and we will arrange this with you as not all patients or medications will suit eRD. If you are keen to know more, contact the surgery to request a review and a conversation with the pharmacy team about eRD.

When your pharmacy supplies your last electronic repeat prescription they will inform you. You will then be required to contact your GP practice to ask for a new set of electronic repeat prescriptions. We will then arrange a medication review before your next batch of prescriptions is authorised.

Common Queries

Why do the practice need to arrange a medication review if a specialist started it and says I need to have it for 2/5/10yrs e.g. oncologist or cardiologist?

It is important to arrange reviews as we are the responsible prescribers. Our pharmacy team will check you are taking it properly, experiencing any side effects and any blood/BP monitoring is needed.

Why do I need to have blood tests for medication monitoring?

Some medication can cause problems with liver/kidney/blood count and it is important we keep an eye on how these are working. We are trying to get all bloods each patient needs done together each year but it can be difficult to do this.

Some medication requires 3 monthly blood monitoring before we can issue the prescription - we are very strict on this and might decline your request if the blood tests have not been done.

How do I get rid of medication I no longer use/need?

Please return to your pharmacy who can dispose of it. Opened medication cannot be reused and will be destroyed. This is why it is important to only request the medication you need, to avoid waste which costs the NHS a massive amount each year.

Why have you asked me to buy the medication from the pharmacy rather than given me a prescription?

Over the Counter (OTC) medications are those that can be bought from pharmacies. GP practices are encouraged not to prescribe medications that are available from pharmacies and supermarkets without a prescription. Buying medicines over the counter will also save the NHS money and help to free up GP appointments for those who really need them.

Examples include treatments for: hayfever, dry skin, scabies, head lice, athlete's foot, conjunctivitis and warts etc.

What are NHS prescription charges?

A single prescription charge is currently £9.90 per item. There are many reasons why you might receive free prescriptions or help with paying for prescriptions. The NHS website has an [eligibility checker](#). If you are not entitled to free prescriptions you could get a prescription prepayment certificate (PPC). You can buy a PPC from the NHS which may make your prescriptions cheaper – 3 or 12 month PPC covers all your prescriptions for that period, no matter how many you need. They cost:

- £32.05 for 3 months
- £114.50 for 12 months

If you pay for NHS prescribed HRT (menopause) medicine 3 or more times in 12 months, an HRT PPC could save you money. You can buy an HRT PPC for a one-off payment of £19.80 (the cost of two single items).

Why are some medications out of stock?

There are some medicines supply issues across the UK, this is worse since the covid pandemic and Brexit. It remains a real issue for the practice and pharmacies and we are working hard to minimise the impact on patients.

Brands and sizes of pills, do we have any control over this?

Not usually, your pharmacy may be able to help with this if you are struggling with certain formulations or brands. In general, we are asked to prescribe “generic” ie. non branded medications.

How can I arrange a blister pack for a relative that is struggling with their medication?

Managing medicines for someone can be a challenge, particularly if they're taking several different types. If the person you care for has a complicated medicine regime with different pills taken at different times of the day, a pharmacist may decide to provide them in dosette boxes (or a blister pack). These are plastic boxes with small compartments that clearly show which pills need to be taken at what time of day. Dosette boxes are not always available for free on the NHS and they're not suitable for every type of medicine. You would need to approach your community pharmacy to see if they have capacity to provide a blister pack each week/month, and this may come with a charge.

Some prescribing policies:

We have a number of policies on our website relating to prescribing:

Travelling

We are not able to issue any medication for longer than 3 months, if you are travelling longer than this, you will need to access medication in the country you are travelling to. We also cannot prescribe NHS prescriptions in this case for exacerbations of pre-existing illnesses or concern over illness and infections when abroad. Always seek medical attention in the country you are staying in if you become unwell. If you need to take controlled drugs in to another country, please check the regulations in this country before travel. We can only supply 28 days of controlled medications.

Dental problems

Definitive treatment for a dental abscess can only be given by a dentist, not your GP. The NICE (National Institute of Clinical Excellence) guidelines states patients should be seen by a dentist for assessment as soon as possible. GPs are not trained in managing dental problems and simply treating with antibiotics will not eliminate the source of infection.

Sedatives

We do not prescribe diazepam/zopiclone or similar for flight-related anxiety/insomnia or for sedation prior to an MRI scan.

Shared care

Our practice policy is not to undertake specialist prescribing (either specialist medications or specialist indications) outside the context of shared care agreements with appropriate NHS specialist support and funding/resourcing.

[Full policy is here](#)