

INTRODUCTION OF 28 DAY REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS



This year the Oxfordshire NHS has a budget deficit of £28 m. As part of a county wide recovery plan, PCT's are looking at ways to improve prescribing efficiency

For some time now we as a practice have resisted the drive to move towards providing 28 day repeat prescriptions, as we realise this may increase inconvenience for some patients, is costly for those who have to pay prescription fees and increases work for our dispensers. However The Department of Health state that

“A 28 day repeat prescribing interval is recognised by the NHS as making the best possible balance between patient convenience, good medical practice and minimal drug wastage”.

Nationally, it has been estimated that about 3% of the total drug spend is currently being wasted (£155m based on total drug spend in the financial year of 2000)

HOW WILL 28 DAY PRESCRIBING AFFECT YOU?

If you are being prescribed a “repeat medicine” your doctor will now start to prescribe enough of each medicine to last you for 28 days. For example, if you are taking 2 tablets a day you will receive 56 tablets, 3 tablets a day 84 tablets, 4 tablets a day 112 tablets etc. This will mean that you will be able to order all of your medicines on the same day each month. We plan to phase this implementation with all patients being switched gradually, and it is hoped this will be completed by June 2006. There are some drugs which are packaged in 3 monthly amounts and will continue to be dispensed in these packs e.g contraceptive pills and HRT. We will always try to be flexible for holiday requirements

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF 28 DAY PRESCRIBING?

- Patients will always start (and finish), their container of medicine on the same day of the week. This will reduce the number of “emergency requests” from patients running out of medicine during a weekend.
- Companies already manufacture a large number of medicines in 28 day patient calendar packs. These packs have patient information leaflets inside and ideally they should not be broken into.
- The government is encouraging companies to manufacture more medicines in these type of packs. It can allow you to check or monitor that you have taken your medication.

- It will reduce the amount of medicine which is currently wasted when medicines are stopped or changed. It will also reduce the amount which is wasted when partly filled containers are thrown away.
- It will be easier for the doctor to review all of the repeat medicines each patient is taking and also easier for the doctor to see if a patient is not taking any of their medicines.
- It will reduce the number of mistakes made by elderly patients when they take their medicine, as patients will be less likely to have multiple partly filled containers of medicine at home.
- Most patients should only visit the dispensary once a month to collect their “repeat medicines”. Presently a large number of patients make several visits a month to the surgery because their medicines run out at different times.

PALS Service

If you have any further queries you can also contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0800 0526088

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP YOU?

Will it cost patients more?

The vast majority of patients collecting repeat prescriptions do not pay prescription charges. If you do have to pay prescription charges and need more than 5 prescription items in 4 months or 14 in 12 months, you can save money by buying a Prescription Prepayment Certificate.

From 1st April 2006 these will cost £34.65 for 4 months and £95.30 for 12 months. Please enquire at dispensary for further details

Ordering and Collection

We are seeking to improve our wholesaler delivery times and will work hard to reduce the collection time from 48 hours after placing your order to **just 24 hours**. Please remember that there will inevitably still be occasions due to reasons beyond our control, when this is not possible e.g if items are out of stock from our drug wholesaler. If you have difficulty in getting to the surgery you can order by telephone, post or fax. Alternatively, where possible, we would like to encourage all our patients to order online. A registration process is required for this, please ask at reception.

We provide a delivery service for **“housebound patients only”** but we are willing to consider extending this service for patients who may have significant problems collecting their medication. This can only be arranged by direct agreement with your doctor or the practice manager.

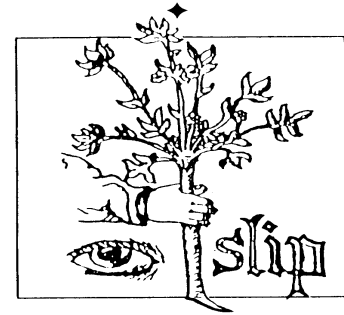
FURTHER INFORMATION TO HELP YOU AND YOUR DOCTOR.

- Your prescription should last at least 28 days. If you are collecting routine medication more often than this please tell the practice.
- All medicines should last for the same number of days. If you are running out of some items or have too much of some medication, please tell the practice.
- Please bear with us if there is a delay in obtaining your prescription. This is usually the doctor reviewing the medication request or the practice making sure that the prescription is correct.

- Be prepared to attend the surgery occasionally for a medication review. The doctor is making sure that the medication you are taking is still the best way to manage your medical condition.
- Be prepared for practice staff to ask questions about your medication when you order a prescription.
- Do not stockpile medicines at home, only order those items that you will need until your next prescription is obtained. (usually 28 days).
- Return any unwanted medication to the practice for safe disposal.
- Please order when you still have a few days of medication in hand to allow for possible delay.

TIPS FOR PATIENTS WHEN ORDERING REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS.

- Do not allow yourself to run out of medicines before you order some more.
- Ask for each of your medicines by name.
- Don't stockpile medicines at home.
- Discuss any worries with your doctor or a nurse.
- Ask at reception for details of how to register for on line ordering. You will require a PIN number.
- It would be helpful when ordering by telephone if you could do so **after 10 a.m.**, however, we do accept that this is not always possible.



IMPORTANT CHANGES TO YOUR REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS

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For on line repeat requests