



Medicine Supply during COVID-19 pandemic

Repeat prescription requests

- Due to the current situation, we recommend the majority of patients submit their requests to the practice electronically, to minimise footfall within the practice.
- We know this is not always possible and so, we have created a flow chart (see attached) detailing methods (in order of preference) in which practices may receive requests.
- For patients with no current online access to their records, the NHS app is preferable as patients can set this up without having to present at the practice with their ID. Further information on the NHS App can be found in Appendix A.
- Some practices are suggesting patients email their requests, although this is not the most ideal method, it may need to be an option for some. Please bear in mind that patients will likely be using non-secure email addresses and it will be necessary to advise patients what information you need from them to verify their identity.
- Ask patients at every contact whether they have online access and assist to set them up where possible.
- Confirm patient's nominations when possible.
- Some patients are reportedly requesting their medicines earlier than usual and this is being promoted by certain pharmacies. These actions may put a strain on the supply chain and exacerbate any potential shortages. We ask that prescriptions are not issued earlier than 10 days before they are due, except in exceptional circumstances.
- It is helpful if you can give patient's their NHS number, particularly when issuing electronic acute prescriptions as this will enable pharmacies to "track" the prescription should there be any issues, without needing to contact yourselves.

Electronic Repeat Dispensing

- This is being promoted nationally; however, this is currently not available for dispensing practices (paper Repeat Dispensing would however be a potential alternative).
- It is important this is set up appropriately, see our Tablet Press Extra for further information.

Over the Counter items

- Practices have reported patients requesting them to prescribe paracetamol because they cannot obtain "over-the-counter" (OTC).
- DHSC advice is that there is **no** supply issue with paracetamol and if stocks are low in retail outlets or community pharmacies, this is due to an increase in the amount being purchased.
- If retail outlets and community pharmacies do not currently have any stock of OTC paracetamol then they will have in the near future.
- For retail outlets and community pharmacies to not continue to run out of stock it will be necessary for them to put controls in place for managing demand.
- It is recommended that GP practices do not prescribe paracetamol for patients who would normally be expected to purchase OTC paracetamol. This same principle should apply to other OTC items.

This edition is also available on GP Portal

Disclaimer

Information in this newsletter is believed to be accurate and true. NHS Nene CCG and NHS Corby CCG employees accept no liability for loss of any nature, to persons, organisations or institutions that may arise as a result of any errors or omissions.

Appendix A) NHS App

The NHS App lets patient's book GP appointments, order repeat prescriptions and access a range of other healthcare services.

Who is it suitable for?

The NHS App is for people aged 13 and over who are registered with a connected GP surgery.

Patients can use some of the app's features without your GP surgery being connected. 95% of surgeries are now connected to the NHS App.

What can patients see on the NHS app?

With the NHS App patients can:

- Check symptoms – find reliable NHS information on hundreds of conditions and treatments, and get immediate advice
- Book appointments – search for, book and cancel appointments at the GP surgery
- Order repeat prescriptions – see their available medications and request a new repeat prescription
- View their medical record – get secure access to their GP medical record
- Register to be an organ donor – easily manage their preferences on the NHS Organ Donor Register
- Choose how the NHS uses their data – register their decision on whether it can be used for research and planning

How do patients access the NHS App?

The NHS App is free to download from the App Store and Google Play.

How does a patient sign up for the app?

Once the patient has downloaded the app, they need to register and provide an email address and a telephone number.

The patient will need to take and submit a photo of one of the following types of photo ID:

- Passport
- UK driving licence (full or provisional)
- European driving licence (full)
- European national identity card

They will then need to record and submit a short video of them saying four numbers. Once this has been completed, they should receive an email within 2 hours to confirm if the information has passed the checks, they will then be able to access their records. Please note that this time period may increase in busy periods.

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For use in COVID-19 pandemic

For patients with no current online access

Ask patient to download NHS app and set up access. It is helpful if you're able to provide the patient with their NHS number (although not essential)

Patient to submit request using NHS app

Patient cannot download NHS app due to technical issues on the app

Patient unable to order online at all due to other reasons, e.g., vulnerable patient

Recommend patient downloads Patient Access/SystemOnline (depending on your clinical system) and orders via this method. You will need to complete the identity verification section

Consider, where appropriate, temporarily accepting telephone requests for this specific patient and annotate their records accordingly

Consider, where appropriate, temporarily accepting Community Pharmacy order for these patients and annotate their records accordingly

Emis practices

SystemOne practices

Documents provided: To reduce footfall in the practice, we would support practices in requesting that patients provide a scanned/photograph copy of their ID via email (to the practice's secure email address) rather than presenting at the practice

Vouched for: The patient can be asked specific questions relating to their medical records, such as "What was your last appointment for?" and "How many items are on your repeat prescription?" to help verify their identity. This information can be written in the "Additional information" section

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The patient can be sent their username and password by email by selecting "Email PIN". On this document, there will also be a long list of other third party companies so it is important to advise the patient to use **Patient Access**

The patient can be sent their username and password by SMS/email (this can be chosen in the "Online Credentials" section)