

# Patients' Guide to Homecare Medicines

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## **Aim of this leaflet**

The aim of this leaflet is to give you a better understanding of the homecare medication service.

## **What is the Homecare Medicines Service?**

The homecare medicines service delivers medicines directly to your home, or an alternative address of your choice. This means that you do not have to come to the pharmacy department every month to collect your medication.

## **Why is the Homecare Medicines Service an option for you?**

The service is recommended for patients who are on established treatment for chronic conditions and would benefit from a service whereby they don't have to wait for medication in hospital after their clinic appointment.

It is sometimes the only option for patients to receive treatment for their conditions, as GPs cannot prescribe certain medications on repeat prescription in the community. In some cases it is the only option to make sure patients receive a regular supply of the best medication to treat their condition.

## **The Homecare Medicines Service Pathway**

At the clinic appointment your consultant/nurse specialist will discuss with you the option of having your medicines, if they are suitable, delivered via a trusted homecare provider.

After this discussion, if you are happy to continue, you will sign a consent form indicating that you are happy for your information to be passed on to the provider. Alternatively, your clinician will sign this on your behalf. Please note the only information the delivery driver will have is your personal details i.e. name, address, contact number and the medicines you will receive.

They will not have access to any personal information relating to your condition. This is all also sent securely and all details are kept confidential.

Once consent has been established your consultant/nurse specialist will forward the consent form and a prescription to the pharmacy department, where a dedicated homecare pharmacy team will check the prescription and send it to the provider.

Once the provider receives the prescription, you will be given a welcome call to arrange your first delivery.

Your first delivery will include a welcome pack from the homecare provider. However some companies may send this out ahead of the first delivery. This will detail all the relevant information about the service i.e. telephone numbers for the provider, information on the medication you are having, administration details, frequently asked questions and some will also include a short DVD illustrating administration.

Along with your medication delivery you will also receive any ancillaries that may be needed. This could include sharps bins, gloves, alcohol wipes etc.

A call from the provider will happen every time you are due a delivery.

They will also call to arrange deliveries when you will have stock from your previous delivery (buffer stock) and this is to ensure that you don't miss any doses.

It is important to note that the providers are not a part of the NHS but are trusted external companies, chosen by the hospital to provide this service.

## **The benefits to you**

- Medicines will be delivered directly to your door, or to an alternative address of your choice.
- Some homecare providers have a text message system, whereby they will send an SMS alert on the day of delivery with an estimated delivery time.
- Access to the providers' website, which contains a range of useful information from deliveries and treatment to patient testimonials and experience. It also has the most up to date information including contact details.
- An appointed representative. This is someone whom you can nominate to represent you or can accept a delivery on your behalf.
- All medication will be delivered in an unmarked van, so no-one except you or your nominated representative will know what is being delivered.

It will need to be signed for by either you or your nominated representative. The delivery driver will not leave your medication with anyone else, i.e. a neighbour.

## **What the homecare provider will know about you**

All information held by the provider is bound by the same confidentiality rules as the NHS (Data Protection Act 1998).

The only information that they will have access to is your name, address, date of birth, contact number, the medicine that they are to supply and a brief outline of what condition you are being treated for.

The provider will only contact you to arrange deliveries. They will not discuss any treatment or conditions you have.

All information they hold about you will be stored on a highly secure computer database.

They will only have this information if you consent. However failing to consent to this may involve a change in the treatment being offered.

## **Clinic Appointments**

Whilst you do not have to come to the hospital pharmacy every month to collect your medicine, it is vital that you attend all hospital appointments that have been booked. This is so the consultant/nurse specialist can monitor your condition. This includes all blood monitoring appointments and failure to maintain these appointments may result in the consultant/nurse specialist stopping treatment.

## **Frequently asked questions**

### **What should I do if I think I'm going to run out of medicine?**

You should firstly discuss with the homecare provider how much medicine you hold at home and arrange your delivery accordingly. In the event that you do run out of medicine you should contact the hospital homecare pharmacy team at the earliest convenience and they will arrange with the provider to make an urgent delivery.

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**What happens if my medicine is lost, delayed or damaged?**

Your medication should never get lost, but in the event that this happens contact the provider who will arrange for an urgent delivery to you. You should also let the clinic team and homecare pharmacy team know so they can complete an incident form for investigation.

In the event that your delivery is delayed, the provider should contact you to inform you of the delay and an approximate time of delivery.

If, when your medicine arrives, it is in a state that you are unhappy with, you have the right to refuse delivery. Your stock will then be returned to the provider who will contact you again to rearrange delivery.

**What happens if I accept delivery and then notice after delivery that there is a problem with the medicine?**

If this happens contact the hospital pharmacy homecare team who will advise you on the appropriate action.

**What if I notice some of my medicine is missing?**

The robust quality control measures at the provider's organisation should prevent this. However, if this happens please contact the hospital pharmacy homecare team who will advise you.

**What should I do if my delivery doesn't arrive on the agreed date?**

If this happens please contact the hospital pharmacy homecare team who will complete an incident form with the provider to investigate. They will also arrange for them to make an urgent delivery if appropriate.

**What if my sharps bin is full and I need a new one?**

This should be checked each time the provider calls you to arrange the next delivery so they can collect when they drop off the next supply of medicine. However if you notice your bin is full or you are getting low on your ancillary stock, please contact the provider and they will arrange collection of the bin and arrange a delivery of your ancillary items.

**What should I do if I feel unwell?**

If you are feeling unwell then you should contact the hospital clinical team who will advise you on whether you should continue with your medication or have a break until you are well again.

**What should I do if I am in hospital?**

If you are admitted to hospital you will need to bring in your medication with you. The doctors who are looking after you whilst you are in hospital will make a clinical decision on whether you should continue with your treatment or not.

If the decision is made to stop or withhold treatment whilst you are an inpatient, then you are free to send your homecare medication home with a nominated representative. It would also be helpful, but not necessary, for someone to let the homecare provider know so that they can halt any deliveries that may be due. It would also be helpful, but not necessary, once discharged from hospital to let the provider know you are no longer in hospital so your deliveries can be restarted.

**Can I travel with this medication?**

If you are travelling abroad then there is no reason for not being able to fly. As all airlines vary, we advise you to contact the airline and see what is required for you to fly. Once you have this information please contact the clinic who will draft a letter allowing you to fly or alternatively contact your homecare provider who can also do this. There are no restrictions if travelling within the United Kingdom.

Please note it is your responsibility to transport your medication appropriately, i.e. in a temperature controlled container if it is a fridge item.

**How do I arrange an extra supply of my medication if I am out of the country and require a delivery?**

You should discuss this at your clinic appointment so the consultant/nurse specialist can arrange for your prescription to cover your holiday period (at least 6 weeks before). This is so necessary arrangements can be made in terms of supply and delivery. However we understand that sometimes, due to unforeseen circumstances, you may need to travel unexpectedly. In this instance please contact the hospital pharmacy homecare team who will arrange for an urgent delivery to be made.

**How do I find out more information about my condition?**

All relevant information should be given to you at your clinic appointment. However, if you feel you require more information then please contact either the hospital clinic or the hospital pharmacy homecare team, who will be happy to answer any questions or concerns you have. You may also research your condition using the NHS Choices website.

**What if I miss a hospital clinic appointment?**

It is vital that you attend all hospital appointments and additional blood monitoring appointments. If, for any reason, you miss an appointment please contact the hospital clinic who will send out a new appointment to you. Please note by missing appointments (including blood monitoring appointments) this could lead to a temporary hold on your treatment schedule.

Please note failure to attend appointments without contacting the hospital clinic team may result in you being discharged from the service and treatment being stopped.

**How do I make a complaint?**

If you are unhappy with the homecare provider's service, please contact the hospital pharmacy homecare team who, on your behalf, will take up your concerns to the relevant team. Once an initial investigation has taken place the provider will respond in writing with a written explanation to the pharmacy homecare team, who will forward the response to you if you require it.

## Contact Information

If you have any further questions please contact the pharmacy homecare team on 01522 573 464.

## Useful telephone numbers

### Homecare providers:

- Healthcare at Home **0333 103 9499**
- Alcura **0800 980 0686**
- Lloyds Pharmacy Clinical Homecare **0345 2636 123**
- Healthnet **0800 193 2366**

### Hospital contacts:

- Rheumatology clinic **01522 573 828**
- Neurology clinic **01522 572 248**
- Dermatology clinic **01522 573247**
- Gastroenterology clinic **Lincoln 01522 582 006 and Pilgrim 01205 446899**
- Paediatrics **01522 573 784**
- Homecare Pharmacist **01522 573 464**

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

If you require this information in another language, large print, audio (CD or tape) or braille, please e-mail the Patient Information team at [patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk)