

## Guidance on Seven Day Prescriptions and Monitored Dosage Systems (MDS)

The appropriate duration of a prescription should be decided by the prescriber, in conjunction with the patient and their pharmacist, taking into account the medicine being prescribed, its monitoring requirements, the condition being treated and the individual patient's needs. **In short, 7 day prescriptions should only be issued by a prescriber when a patient has a clinical need for their medication to be supplied on a weekly basis.**

### When is it appropriate to issue 7 day prescriptions?

- Unstable patients whose medication regimen may be susceptible to frequent change. An MDS cannot be amended once supplied to the patient. If medication changes mid-supply, a replacement prescription is required for all medication so new MDS devices can be supplied to the patient.
- Patients who are considered to be at risk of medication overuse and it is not safe to provide longer than a 7 day supply.
- When a patient is having a monitored dosage system (MDS) and it contains medication that is very unstable and therefore means that the monitored dosage system has to be made up and collected each week.
- When a clinical assessment has taken place by the prescriber or pharmacist.

### When is it inappropriate to issue 7 day prescriptions?

- Where no clinical assessment has taken place by the prescriber or pharmacist.
- Where there is no clinical reason for the patient to only receive a one week supply at a time.
- To support the provision of a MDS unless there is a clinical need for the patient to receive their medication on a weekly basis (as listed above).
- When a direct request for 7 day prescriptions is made by community pharmacists to support the provision of an MDS and where there is no clinical reason for the patient not to receive a 28 day supply. NB if a patient receives 4 x 7 day supply then a 28 day prescription should be issued.
- Patients in care homes and those being supported at home by domiciliary care workers (unless a risk assessment has identified appropriate need in line with list above by the care agency).

### Supply of Monitored Dosage Systems (MDS)

- The provision of a "reasonable adjustment" to support the patient with their medication is based on the clinical judgement of the assessing prescriber or pharmacist / dispenser and it may include the provision of MDS. Before making a supply in MDS, it is essential that the pharmacist satisfies themselves that the patient will be able to use the MDS safely.
- The decision to supply an MDS should take into account any concerns from health care professionals of the patient's ability to take their medication and should be undertaken following an assessment by the prescriber or pharmacist / dispenser with reference to the Equality Act 2010. The assessor should take into account the person's needs and preferences and involve the person and/or their family members or carers and the home care provider in decision-making.
- Where a prescription for 28 days treatment is deemed clinically appropriate and issued for a patient who satisfies the clinical criteria for adjustment and it is decided that the adjustment required is an MDS, then 4 x 7 day MDS containers or 1 x 28 day MDS container should be prepared and supplied to the patient at the same time.
- Where 7 day prescriptions are issued, the patient must receive the medication weekly and there must be a genuine clinical need for this as listed above.
- MDS should only be provided to meet the clinical needs of the patient, not primarily the needs of a care home, community pharmacy or care agency. Support for care homes or other care agencies should not be funded by (prescription) dispensing fees. There is no NHS contractual requirement on community pharmacists or GPs to deliver medications to patients' homes although some pharmacies / dispensing practices may offer to do this as a business decision.

### Practical ways to support patients

Please note that prescribers and pharmacists may choose from a variety of aids to assist patients or carers who have difficulty managing medications. These include:

- Large print medicine labels
- Special easy opening medication containers
- A reminder chart showing the particular times to take the appropriate medicines
- MDS boxes containing 1 week or 4 week supply when identified as the only reasonable adjustment required to overcome the obstacles to the use of the dispensed medicine.

Detailed guidance is available on the link below:

<http://psnc.org.uk/contract-it/pharmacy-regulation/dda/the-equality-act-2010-28-day-prescribing/>

County Durham and Tees Valley CCGs Guidance on Seven Day Prescriptions and Monitored Dosage Systems	Status: Approved (County Durham and Tees Valley APC)
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