

## 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?

7 day prescriptions are for patients who need their medicine supplying weekly for clinical and/ or safety reasons. 7 day prescriptions should only be issued when clinically necessary, this is typically in one of two scenarios:

1. When there is a clear clinical need for restricting the quantity of medication that a patient holds at any one time e.g. concerns about overdose or misuse.
2. There are frequent changes to the medication regime - using 7 day quantities will help to minimise waste as a result of medication changes. Once stability in dose/medication choice has been achieved, moving to 28 day quantities should be considered.

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

28 day prescriptions are appropriate for the majority of patients who are stable and for whom there are no safety concerns. 7 day prescriptions should not be used:

- If the prescriber deems it unnecessary based on clinical assessment
- Simply to support the provision of a compliance aid once a week in the absence of any safety or clinical concerns.

### Practical ways to support patients

Please note that pharmacists and prescribers 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.

More information on which interventions are available to aid medication adherence can be found on the Specialist Pharmacy Service [here](#).

### 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/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.
- An MDS cannot be amended once supplied to the patient. If medication changes mid-supply, a replacement prescription is required for all medication so a new MDS devices can be supplied to the patient.

Detailed guidance and support for healthcare professionals and patients, carers or families is available from the West of England Academic Health Science Network (WEAHSN) [here](#).

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