

North of Tyne and Gateshead APC Guidance for issuing prescriptions requested by a third party

This document has been prepared and approved for use in Newcastle Gateshead, North Tyneside and Northumberland.

Further copies are available from:

NECS Medicines Optimisation Pharmacists	NECS Medicines Optimisation Team	T 01912172756
Newcastle Gateshead CCG Medicines Optimisation Pharmacists	Newcastle Gateshead CCG	T 0191 2172798
Medicines Management Unit, Freeman Hospital, Newcastle upon Tyne	Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust	T 0191 2231386

An electronic version of this document can also be viewed / downloaded from
the North of Tyne Area Prescribing Committee's Website <http://www.northoftyneapc.nhs.uk>

Approved on behalf of the	Name	Signature	Date
North of Tyne Medicines Guidelines and Use Group	Dr M Wright		2 nd March 2016
North of Tyne Area Prescribing Committee	D. Campbell	D. Campbell	
Newcastle North and East CCG, Newcastle West CCG, Gateshead CCG, North Tyneside CCG, Northumberland CCG			

Guidance for issuing prescriptions requested by a third party

General Principles for issuing prescriptions

- Prescriptions should **only** be issued at the request of the patient/patient's carer except with the express permission of the practice
- Initiation of new prescription must be based on a clear clinical need for an appliance not currently being met and not on the basis of patient demand which may be influenced by direct marketing. Requests for prescriptions should **only be accepted** from a **third party** (Dietitian, Continence Specialist Nurse/Stoma Specialist Nurse, hospital ward staff or District Nurse, supply company) if a prior agreement/permission has been made with the GP practice
- **NO** prescription products should be supplied to a patient without a signed prescription
- Generally there should be **NO** urgent supplies made except in exceptional circumstances where there is express prior agreement from the prescriber
- Prescribers are **not obliged** to issue retrospective prescriptions when a supplier has supplied to the patient in advance of a valid prescription
- Enteral feed suppliers, dispensing appliance or pharmacy contractors **must not** contact prescribers to request the provision of retrospective prescriptions to cover a non-urgent situation where no prior approval has been received
- The contractors are required to meet their contractual obligations; problems and issues that arise may relate to contractual issues that should be addressed via their contracts through liaison with the NHS England Local Area Team (contract holder)
- It is essential patients are aware that they have a **choice** as to where their prescription(s) are dispensed

Incontinence and stoma appliances

- Patients requiring incontinence or stoma appliances can have these dispensed by a dispensing appliance contractor (DAC), a community pharmacy contractor or a dispensing doctor
- DACS and community pharmacies* as part of their dispensing contracts are required to provide a number of related essential services including the offer of home delivery, provision of sundries, offer of appropriate and expert advice, repeat dispensing to include stock request and supply monitoring
- Some contractors may offer advanced cutting and use review services to further support patients' effective use of appliances

Who does this guidance apply to?

This Guidance applies to the following Groups:

- GP Practices
- Community Pharmacy Contractors*, and includes Hospital to Home enteral feed supplier
- Dispensing Appliance Contractors (DACs)
- District Nurses/ Practice Nurses/ Stoma Specialist Nurse / Continence Specialist Nurse
- Patients their Carers/Relatives

Use of this guidance

The guidance has been developed by the north of Tyne Medicines Guidelines and Use Group (MGUG), and approved by the Area Prescribing Committee for use by all member CCGs, to establish a set of guiding principles to support the management of prescriptions requested by third parties. Practices may incorporate these guidelines into practice policy or use them as standalone guidance.

A template letter is provided that practices may wish to use to inform suppliers of the practice's position where the principles are not adhered to, see appendix 1,

Notes

How patients obtain supplies of non-drug items and enteral feeds.

The patient will have an initial supply of items from the hospital on discharge and the stoma/continence specialist nurse/ dietitian will provide a list of possible suppliers & product codes needed on prescription. In some cases the list of products is sent directly to the GP practice. The patient is advised to order the prescription from the GP.

Direct marketing to the patient has a significant influence on requests for initiation of prescriptions, these request should only be considered where there is a clinical need not currently being met by a product approved or usually provided as part of routine clinical practice.

Supply options for repeat prescriptions.

1. The patient orders the prescription

The patient contacts their surgery to obtain the prescription for the required items and then:

- sends them to a supply company
- asks the GP practice to send it to a supply company via Freepost.
- a Community pharmacy* fulfils the order
- If the practice is a Dispensing Practice then it can supply the items required - this only applies to patients who are eligible to register as dispensing patients

2. The third party handles arrangements for reordering prescriptions

The patient calls the third party (or they call the patient) on a monthly basis. The company will then contact the practice to obtain the prescription for the required items and deliver them to the patient's home. It is advised this arrangement must only be entered into with the expressed permission of the patient's GP practice.

In the case of stoma supplies this will include a free supply of wipes and disposal bags. The company will offer advice and will also cut flanges for the patient.

Changes to the Prescription.

If a specialist reviews the patient, the products required on repeat prescription may change. In this case the specialist or patient may contact the practice to ask for a new prescription.

Action to take where companies make supplies in advance of prescription requests

Where suppliers request prescriptions for items supplied that are not initiated by requests by the patient, specialist or prescriber consider sending a letter to advise no retrospective arrangements will be sanctioned.

Ostomy products

The contractual conditions of Dispensing Appliance Contractors (DACs) - state that they must supply all products listed in Part IX of the NHS Drug Tariff, which includes a broad range of ostomy and urology products. If they do not have the products in stock, medical product wholesalers exist to supply them with these products at short notice.

* Not all community pharmacies dispense appliances. Community pharmacies may provide two levels of service for stoma appliances if they supply in the normal course of their business. All community pharmacies have to offer Essential Services and they will provide the patient with complementary wipes, disposal bags, a home delivery service and advice as part of this contracted service. If they are signed up to Advanced Services they will also cut flanges for the patient.

Appendix 1

TEMPLATE LETTER TO THIRD PARTIES ABOUT PRESCRIBING ARRANGEMENTS

Name of Third Party

<Practice Address>

Address of Third Party <Date>

Dear <Third Party>

Re: Requests for Prescriptions

In line with guidance that has been provided by the North of Tyne Medicines Guidelines and Use Review group please note:

- Requests for repeat prescriptions will only be accepted from the patient, except where there is prior agreement for a third party ordering arrangement.
- No items should be supplied to the patient in advance of a prescription.
- Please ensure that you have a valid prescription before making a supply to the patient. It is the policy of this practice not to supply post-dated or post supply prescriptions without prior agreement.
- Repeat prescriptions will not be issued more frequently than <4 weekly>
- Should you wish to discuss this further, please contact the surgery using the above details.

Many thanks for your time and co-operation with this matter.

Yours sincerely