

Delivery of medicines

There is no NHS delivery service in place to support the delivery of prescription by community pharmacy. As it currently stands prescription delivery is a private arrangement between patient and pharmacy, therefore the pharmacy can select which patients it delivers to and pharmacies can continue to charge for a delivery if they wish (note most pharmacies do not charge but offer deliveries to support their patients).

There is a significant and increasing demand for delivery of medicines in response to Covid-19.

To support community pharmacy in dealing with the increasing delivery demands we ask that information given to patients does not suggest that delivery of their prescription will be the norm.

Patients who request or require delivery of prescriptions should be asked if they have a family member, friend or local volunteer who can collect the prescription from their usual pharmacy. Pharmacies are asking 'who is getting your shopping for you' to help identify this person.

Only where the patient cannot identify someone to pick up their prescription should a request for delivery be made to the pharmacy.

Prescription delivery message for patients

System message

If you are unable, or advised not to, leave your home and need your prescription medication, the best option is to ask a family member, friend or someone else you trust to collect the medication from the pharmacy on your behalf. This person should not be self-isolating. This may be the same person who helps you with getting your shopping while you are unable to leave your home. If you do not have a person who can help you, then call your usual pharmacy to ask if they are able to deliver for you.

Please note that community pharmacy is receiving many more requests for delivery than usual, so you may be asked if there is someone else who can collect your prescription for you or have to wait a little longer for your prescription to be delivered.

Pharmacy message

There is a significant and increased demand for delivery of medicines at the moment. If you are able to ask someone, such as a friend or family member to pick up your prescription from the pharmacy, this is the best option, if possible.

Please note that we are receiving many more requests for delivery than usual, so you may have to wait a little longer for your prescription to be delivered. The Coronavirus Pandemic is placing a big demand on pharmacy teams and healthcare services We're helping everyone as fast as we can. You can help us by remaining polite and patient.

Please ensure that any messages, webpage information and conversations with patients do not simply direct people to 'ring your pharmacy for delivery.

Urgent prescriptions

If a prescriber deems that a prescription needs to be urgently delivered to a patient who does not have a trusted person to collect from the pharmacy, the prescriber must first speak to the community pharmacy to ask if the pharmacy is able to deliver and confirm when the pharmacy is able to deliver.

IMPORTANT NOTE - There is no way of communicating clinical urgency between prescriber and pharmacy staff at the time the prescription is downloaded from the spine. It is the responsibility of the prescriber to verbally inform the pharmacy of urgent prescriptions to the pharmacy and discuss if the pharmacy is able to deliver. Following previous serious incidents NHS Digital provided this response:

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2017-0290-Response-by-NHS-Digital.pdf>

NHS Volunteers

It is currently understood (2/4/20), that the GoodSam app is aimed at shielded patients. These do not make up the majority of delivery requests. Community pharmacy contractors have not been given any information on using GoodSam for additional patients and need assurance about the checks in place to ensure that the volunteers can be safely used to handle patient details and prescription medicines.

National Delivery Service

You may have heard about a national medicines delivery service. This service is still being discussed and will only be for the most vulnerable patients who cannot find a friend or family member to collect their medicines for them. If you or your family or friends are able to continue collecting medicines from pharmacies, please do so. This will help to protect pharmacies from an unmanageable increase in workload at this critical time.