



## Electronic Prescription Service in Care Homes

### Introduction

There have been issues locally with GP practices implementing Electronic Prescription Services (EPS) for their patients within care homes. One of the main reasons for these issues is that care homes need to check the medication that has been prescribed for their residents **before** it is sent to the pharmacy for dispensing. Otherwise discrepancies are only discovered when the care home receive the medication which inevitably means that there is little time to resolve the matter. The other concern is that with EPS the prescriptions for care home patients are mixed up with all the pharmacy's other prescriptions which means the pharmacy cannot identify if a prescription is a repeat for next month, interim or acute.

### What is the potential solution?

The preferred solution is that EPS **should only** be used for care homes if they are already ordering their medication online. The care home is then able to check online when their request has been accepted by the practice and whether a prescription has been issued. This process is quicker, auditable and reduces the number of phone calls to the practice because the care home is able to check when a prescription has been issued online.

### What is involved in online ordering?

- The care home will need to obtain consent from their residents for proxy access to online services.
- Care home staff will need to learn a new system for ordering their medications and it is much better if the care home only uses one GP practice so that they do not need a different system for every practice.
- The GP practice will need to create online user accounts for the care home staff members and assign the care home patients to these online users.
- The GP practice should try and make sure the repeats are aligned, interim scripts are being issued to bring repeats in line and quantities on repeat are appropriate.
- The GP practice will need to amend the repeat templates for care home residents to enable ordering 2-3 weeks in advance, in line with best practice.
- For EMIS practices individual resident logins and passwords will need to be issued for access to online services. The care homes with these practices will need to have a robust process in place to ensure that the passwords are kept securely and a log is maintained as to when resident's online services are accessed.

### What support has The Care Home Advice Pharmacy Team been offering across the county?

- The Care Home Advice Pharmacy Team has produced some online ordering guidance for SystemOne practices which is available on pathfinder <http://www.pathfinder-rf.northants.nhs.uk/media/3541003/chaps-online-ordering-eps-guide-v1.pdf>. Due to individual resident passwords for EMIS it is advisable that these GP practices contact The Care Home Advice Pharmacy Team for further guidance.
- The Care Home Advice Pharmacy Team can be contacted for advice concerning implementation of online ordering by emailing [kirstin.frost@neneccg.nhs.uk](mailto:kirstin.frost@neneccg.nhs.uk)

This edition is also available on PathfinderRF  
<http://www.pathfinder-rf.northants.nhs.uk/nene>

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