

Patient-Led Ordering of Repeat Medicines

Quick guide for GP practices and community pharmacies

The key change

Repeat medicines should usually be requested by the patient, their authorised representative, carer, relative, care home representative or GP practice, rather than routinely by a community pharmacy.

Why is this changing?

- Improve patient safety and make sure medicines are still needed.
- Reduce medicines waste and unnecessary stockpiling.
- Increase patient involvement and ownership.
- Improve the accuracy of repeat prescribing records.
- Release clinical and administrative time for patient care.

How can patients order?

- NHS App or another approved patient ordering route.
- GP practice online services.
- Directly through the practice's agreed process.
- Through an authorised representative, carer, family member or advocate.

Also consider

- Electronic repeat dispensing (eRD), where clinically appropriate.
- Appropriate 28-day prescribing intervals in line with LSCICB expectations.

Protecting vulnerable patients

- No patient should lose access to medicines because they cannot order independently.
- Practices and pharmacies should identify patients needing extra support together.
- Examples include significant cognitive impairment, dementia, learning disabilities, palliative care, severe physical disability, complex mental health needs, safeguarding risk, or no suitable support network.
- Pharmacy ordering may continue where needed for clinical or safeguarding reasons.

If an exception is agreed

- Agree it jointly between the GP practice and community pharmacy.
- Document it clearly and review it periodically.
- Base the decision on clinical or safeguarding need, not convenience.

Care homes

- Existing arrangements should continue unless an alternative has been formally agreed and implemented.

Implementation

- Practices should give local community pharmacies a minimum of three months' notice before going live.
- Engage early to identify vulnerable patients and agree safe transition arrangements.
- Use consistent patient messages and reassure patients that support remains available.
- Use local flexibility where needed for patient safety, continuity of care, or operational challenges.

SAFE • PATIENT-CENTRED • CONSISTENT • COLLABORATIVE

**LSCICB and Community Pharmacy Lancashire & South Cumbria
are working together to support a safe, proportionate transition.**