

Communications toolkit – Here to help campaign.

Repeat prescriptions – Don't wait until it's too late!

(V2. 24/05/24)

About this toolkit

The 'Don't wait until it's too late' repeat prescriptions campaign toolkit is for GPs, pharmacists, NHS foundation trusts and partners across the North East and North Cumbria.

The campaign aims to encourage anyone who relies on taking regular medication to order repeat prescriptions in plenty of time - to avoid requiring emergency medication - by using the NHS App, visiting their local pharmacy or using their GP surgery online ordering system.

This toolkit includes information and resources to use across your own channels to help raise awareness with patients . The online resources can be found here:

<https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help/repeat-prescriptions/>

This campaign builds on the region's wider 'here to help' campaign which signposts people to the most appropriate service for their health needs.

Your support in helping us to share these messages is very much appreciated.

For further help or advice on using this toolkit, or if you need support to tailor assets, please contact either: Andrea Jones, andrea.jones2@nhs.net or Abbie Mulgrew, abbie.mulgrew@nhs.net



Overview

The following sets out our plans to communicate changes to how some people access emergency medicines when they run out of repeat medication and their GP surgery is closed.

The following sets out our plans to communicate changes and raise awareness of how people can access emergency medicines when they run out of their repeat medication.

This includes an expansion of our region-wide Here to Help campaign to further remind the public of the importance of ordering repeat medication before they run out and in plenty of time (allowing at least 7 working days) so they can stay well and also reduce pressures on NHS services.

Currently people have a number of options if they have not ordered their repeat medication before it runs out and find themselves in an emergency situation. They can contact their GP surgery, use a walk -in emergency service at a community pharmacy or contact NHS 111.

From the end of May, the NHS funded walk -in emergency service at a community pharmacy will no longer be provided.

Background

During the Covid-19 pandemic, an emergency medicines walk-in service was introduced in community pharmacies to relieve pressure on emergency departments and NHS 111. This was commissioned, using national monies made available at the time, with funding agreed until 31 March 2024.

This service enabled community pharmacists to give an emergency supply of medicines to patients who 'walk-in' to a pharmacy and had not contacted NHS 111 or used NHS111 online prior to using the service.

Funding for this has now ended and it has been decided that this walk-in service will no longer be provided by community pharmacies from June 2024.

Patients will still be able to access emergency medicines by contacting NHS 111, online or by phone where they will be referred to their pharmacy for an emergency medicine. NHS111 referrals could also be made to a UTC or if necessary, A&E.

Campaign objectives

- Raise awareness with patients about the importance of ordering prescriptions on time
- Encourage patients to order their repeat prescriptions before they run out
- Reduce the number of patients seeking emergency prescriptions via NHS111
- Reduce the cost of prescribing emergency medication

Target Audience

- Patients with chronic conditions who require regular medication
- Older patients who are more likely to have multiple prescriptions
- Carers who are responsible for managing medication for others

Key messages

- **Don't wait until it's too late** - order your repeat prescriptions before they run out and in plenty of time – Ideally order within seven days working days before you run out.
- If you need emergency medicines and your GP surgery is closed - contact NHS 111online or by phone

We will also be communicating the changes to stakeholders and those people who may have referred patients to a walk-in pharmacy consultation for emergency medication and asking them to support our campaign.

Press release – repeat prescriptions

People taking regular medication are being urged not to wait until it's too late to order their repeat prescriptions.

GPs and pharmacists across the North East and North Cumbria are reminding patients, who rely on prescribed medicines, to make sure they organise their repeat medication in plenty of time to stay well and avoid increased cost and pressures on NHS services.

Ewan Maule, clinical director of medicines and pharmacy, NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) said: "If you take regular medication it's extremely important to plan ahead and order your repeat prescriptions in plenty of time.

"Taking daily medication is a vitally important part of treatment, especially for those with long-term health problems and people can become seriously ill, quite quickly, if they run out.

"Not ordering in time and having to use emergency medication services not only puts patients at risk, it also puts increased pressure on already stretched NHS services and local healthcare budgets".

With GP practices and community pharmacies having limited opening hours over bank holiday periods, doctors are also reminding people that any repeat prescriptions should be ordered at least 72 hours in advance of any holiday weekends to guarantee they will be available on time.

Dr Neil O'Brien, chief medical officer, NHS North East and North Cumbria ICB, added: "Every year, particularly over bank holidays, NHS111 receives thousands of calls from people who have either lost or run out of their prescribed medicine.

"If you take regular medications, for whatever reason, and if you are due a repeat prescription over a bank holiday, please remember it can take up to seven days to order your prescription and have it dispensed, so make sure you make your request in plenty of time.

"The easiest way to order a repeat prescription is by using GP online services, the NHS App or through your own GP practice website. If you do not have access to GP online services, you can contact your GP practice to order prescriptions directly.

"Remember NHS111 is available 24 hours a day, seven days week, to offer help and advice on a whole range of medical problems, when your GP surgery is closed, - arranging your repeat prescription before you run out will help to avoid any additional pressure on this vital service and other NHS resources."

Toolkit contents (TBA)

This toolkit contains useful resources including social media graphics along with accompanying messages, visuals for GP waiting room and pharmacies, display screens and posters.

- posters
- social media graphics and messaging
- digital screen displays
- animation

You can access all assets at: <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help/repeat-prescriptions/>

How can you support?

Please use this toolkit to:

- Support conversations with patients around ordering repeat medication in plenty of time.
- Share the resources within your practice/community pharmacy.
- Encourage patients to use the NHS App, visit their local pharmacy or GP surgery online ordering system to arrange repeat medication in plenty of time – especially over bank holidays.
- If you have social media accounts, please help us by sharing the resources within this toolkit by posting on your social media channels and sharing assets with your groups and networks.
- If you would like to help us create short, informative videos to support the campaign, please contact andrea.jones2@nhs.net

Social media messaging - download at <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help/repeat-prescriptions/>

Repeat prescriptions messaging	
<p>1. If you or someone you care for takes regular medication</p> <p>Don't wait until it's too late!</p> <p>Make sure you order your repeat prescription 7 days before you run out.</p> <p>You can order your repeat prescription on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your NHS account • the NHS App • or contact your GP practice or pharmacist <p>Find out more at https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions/how-to-order-a-repeat-prescription/</p> <p>#HereToHelp</p>	

<p>2. Don't wait until it's too late!</p> <p>Did you know you can order your repeat prescriptions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the NHS App • via your NHS account • or contact your GP practice or pharmacist <p>Make sure you're prepared and order 7 days before you run out.</p> <p>Find out more at: https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions/how-to-order-a-repeat-prescription/</p> <p>#HereToHelp</p>	<p>The poster features a clock with arms and legs, appearing to be running. The background is split into teal and pink sections. The text 'Don't wait until it's too late.' is written in a large, bold, purple font. Below it, a blue banner contains the text 'Order your repeat prescription in plenty of time.' and a 'HERE TO HELP' button.</p>
<p>3. Repeat prescription due?</p> <p>Don't wait until it's too late!</p> <p>Order on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your NHS account • via the NHS App • or contact your GP practice or pharmacist <p>It can take up to 7 days to order and collect a prescription!</p> <p>Find out more at: https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions/how-to-order-a-repeat-prescription/</p> <p>#HereToHelp</p>	<p>The poster features a clock with arms and legs, appearing to be running. The background is split into pink and teal sections. The text 'Repeat prescription due?' is written in a large, bold, white font on a pink background. Below it, a purple banner contains the text 'Order online on the NHS App or contact your GP practice or pharmacist.' and a 'HERE TO HELP' button. At the bottom, the text 'Don't wait until it's too late.' is written in a bold, white font on a teal background.</p>

<p>4.</p>	<p>Forgotten to order your repeat prescription in time?</p> <p>You can request an emergency supply online at 111.nhs.uk to collect from a pharmacy.</p> <p>But don't wait until it's too late!</p> <p>Order in time on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your NHS account • via the NHS App • or at your GP practice <p>Remember it can take up to 7 days to order and collect a prescription!</p> <p>Find out more at: https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions/how-to-order-a-repeat-prescription/</p> <p>#HereToHelp</p>	
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Animation

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Posters

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