

General Patient Information
on
Homecare Medicines
Services

Pharmacy Department



Introduction

You have been given this leaflet as your doctor has prescribed you one or more medicines that can be delivered directly to your home or other address of your choosing. This is called a **homecare medicines service**. This leaflet aims to provide you with the information you need to make informed decisions about whether you wish to receive your medicines via this homecare medicines service and, to make sure you receive your medicines safely and securely.

What is a homecare medicines service?

A **homecare medicines service** is a term used to describe the delivery of certain hospital prescribed medicines directly to your home or alternative address that you choose. In some cases there may be other types of support included such as nursing or teaching in the home environment.

Who will provide my medicines?

The homecare providers we use are private companies who are not part of the NHS or the hospital but have been chosen by us to provide this service to you. The actual homecare provider we use will vary depending on which medicine or treatment you are receiving. In some cases there may be two or more providers available to provide the service, in which case you, along with your doctor or nurse, will be able to choose your homecare provider.

Occasionally we may change the homecare medicines service provider we use. This will always be managed with little or no effect to you. We always use tried and trusted homecare providers who can demonstrate years of experience in providing quality homecare medicines services.

How will a homecare medicines service benefit me?

Your medicines will be delivered directly to your home, or other safe and convenient place of your choice, at regular intervals. This will mean you do not have to attend the hospital simply to pick up more medicines and can fit the delivery in with your normal life.

Whilst you do not need to come to the hospital for your prescriptions, you must still attend your routine clinic appointments as the hospital needs to monitor your health. The hospital will not be able to continue homecare for you without these check-ups.

Are there any risks?

Homecare medicines services are considered by the NHS as a safe and convenient method of supplying your medicines although you should be aware of the small risk that your medicines don't reach you in time leading to a missed dose. To minimise this risk your deliveries will be carefully managed and scheduled, and contingency plans are in place for emergency deliveries on the same day should the need arise.

You can further reduce this risk by monitoring how much medicine you have left, informing the appropriate people if you are running low and by co-operating with the homecare company by being available for delivery at the times you agree with them. **Please see “What should I do if I have a problem?” on the next page.**

What are the delivery options?

Your delivery options vary depending on the type of treatment being delivered. Deliveries are usually made by:

- van delivery to your home
- van delivery to your place of work or a named friend or relative’s address

In some cases you may be able to choose:

- collection from your local Lloyds or Boots pharmacy, or
- Royal Mail Special Delivery

Your medicines will always need to be signed for by yourself or by someone else you agree with the homecare provider in advance. The hospital will need this signature as “proof of delivery” to check the homecare provider has delivered the medicines as expected.

What information will the homecare provider know about me?

Your personal details (including name, home address, contact details, medical condition and treatment) will be held on the provider's highly secure computer network. The homecare provider is bound by the same confidentiality rules as the NHS regarding accessible patient information (The Data Protection Act 1998). You will be asked to agree, either in writing or verbally, that you are prepared for a homecare provider to hold information about you and your medical condition. The homecare provider will only contact you to arrange delivery of your medicines and they will only discuss your treatment with yourself or a member of the hospital team.

What should I do if I have a problem?

It is important that you know who to contact if you have a problem. This will depend on the type of homecare service you are receiving and the arrangements the hospital has made. Normally, any clinical issues with your care will need to be referred to the hospital and you should only need to phone the homecare provider for issues about your delivery. If you are unhappy with the service you obtain from the homecare provider you should discuss this with the hospital as well.

Please refer to the back page of this leaflet to see who to contact in specific instances.

Your homecare provider will provide you with a contact telephone number and out of hours contact information for their customer services department or, in some cases, a named care co-ordinator in their information leaflet that's sent alongside your first delivery.

Contact information for the hospital, and examples of who to contact and when, are included in the 'Therapy Specific' patient information leaflet that you have been provided alongside this one.

What other information is available?

Further information is available in the following documents:

Therapy specific patient information leaflet – This will be provided to you by your doctor or nurse and contains more detailed information that is specific to your prescribed treatment.

Patient's Charter – The information provided in the 'General' and 'Therapy Specific Homecare Medicines Services' patient information leaflets summarise the most important information of the Patient's Charter. The Patient's Charter is available on the Trust's website at www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk/patient-information under the 'Pharmacy' heading. If you do not have access to the internet your doctor or nurse can provide you with a printed copy.

Homecare provider information leaflet – If you choose to register to a homecare medicines service your homecare provider will send you a leaflet along with your first delivery. This will have further information about their service and their contact information.

Please use this space to write down any other questions you may like to ask:

Who should I contact?

You should contact the **homecare provider** if:

- The delivery has not come when it was supposed to.
- You would like to change the agreed delivery date or time.
- You are running low on medication and have not been contacted by the homecare provider to arrange a delivery.
- You have any other query around the delivery of your medication.
- You would like to make a complaint.

You should contact the **medical team** if:

- You feel your condition is getting worse.
- You feel generally unwell.
- You want to discuss your condition and/or your treatment.

You should contact your **pharmacy homecare specialist** if:

- You are unable to get through to your homecare provider to arrange a delivery.
- You have remaining concerns following discussion with your homecare provider.
- You would like to make a formal complaint about your homecare medicines service.
- You experience an unexpected side effect.
- You would like to discuss details of your medication.

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You can request this information in a different format or another language.