

## **Information for Patients about 28 day Prescribing**

### **Norwood Surgery is changing to 28 day prescribing**

If you are being prescribed medicines on a repeat prescription the amount of medicine you receive on each prescription may change. Your GP practice is changing to '28 day prescribing' this means that each time you get a prescription you will receive enough of each medicine to last you 28 days.

#### **What is the reason behind this change?**

Research has shown that a very large amount of medication is wasted when doctors prescribe for 56 days or more, resulting in the loss of millions of pounds of NHS money. This money could be used to provide services elsewhere in the NHS.

The Department of Health supports 28 day prescribing and has said: "A 28 day repeat prescribing interval is recognised by the NHS as making the best possible balance between patient convenience, good medical practice and minimal drug wastage".

#### **How will 28 day prescribing affect you?**

If you are being prescribed a "repeat medicine" your doctor will now start to prescribe enough of each medicine to last you for 28 days. For example, if you are taking 2 tablets a day you will receive 56 tablets, 3 tablets a day 84 tablets, 4 tablets a day 112 tablets etc.

#### **Are there any exceptions?**

Depending on your individual circumstances there may be exceptions to the 28 day policy. For example there are some drugs which are packaged in 3 monthly amounts e.g. contraceptive pills and hormone replacement therapy (HRT). These will continue to be supplied in this way.

#### **What are the benefits of 28 day prescribing?**

You will always start (and finish), the container of each medicine on the same day of the week. In this way, it will be easier for your doctor to review all of the repeat medicines you are taking and to see if you might be having problems with any of your medicines.

Companies already manufacture a large number of medicines in 28 day 'calendar packs' that show the day of the week on the packaging. This packaging allows you to check and monitor that you have taken your medication each day. These packs also have patient information leaflets inside and ideally the pack should not be broken into as they are designed to be supplied with this information included.

28 day prescribing reduces the amount of medicine which is currently wasted when medicines are stopped or changed by doctors. It also reduces the amount which is wasted when partly filled containers are thrown away.

At the moment, a large number of patients need to order their repeat prescription items several times a month, because their medicines run out at different times. As you will finish your medicines all at the same time, you should only need to order your repeat prescription once a month. It will also reduce the likelihood of needing to make an emergency request if you run out of medicine.

### Will it cost patients more?

The vast majority of patients collecting repeat prescriptions do not pay prescription charges; therefore there will be no difference to these patients in terms of cost.

If you do have to pay prescription charges and you need more than one prescription item a month the best way to pay for your prescriptions would be to obtain a Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC).

A PPC lets you get as many NHS prescriptions as you need for a set price. If you regularly pay prescription charges, a PPC could save you money. The price of a PPC has remained the same over the last few years, whereas the prescription charge increases each year.

The current prescription charge in England is £8.60 per item and a PPC costs:

- £29.10 for 3 months
- £104 for 12 months

Number of prescribed medicines you need each month	Saving with a 12 month PPC	Saving with a 3 month PPC
2	Over £100 a year	Over £20 in 3 months
3	Over £200 a year	Over £45 in 3 months
4	Over £300 a year	Over £70 in 3 months

Ask your community pharmacist for more information or if you have access to the internet use the following link <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/help-nhs-prescription-costs/prescription-prepayment-certificates>

### GP Online Services

Once you have signed up, GP online services allow you to renew or order repeat prescriptions online. The service is free and everyone who is registered with a GP can have access to their practice's online services. For more information use the following link or contact your GP practice.

<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/doctors/Pages/gp-online-services.aspx>

### Further Information

If you have any questions about 28 day prescribing, or would like more information, please contact the GP practice and ask to speak to our medicines management technician *Christine Lea*. You can also ask your community pharmacist (chemist) for further information or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0800 218 2333.