

To: All community pharmacists

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Web Site: [www.hscboard.hscni.net](http://www.hscboard.hscni.net)

28 May 2015

Dear Colleague,

### **Duplicate prescriptions**

A duplicate prescription is where an identical prescription is produced as a replacement for a lost or damaged prescription. The need for a duplicate prescription should be by exception, when the original prescription is lost or accidentally destroyed or defaced and unusable.

A review of payments for prescriptions submitted to BSO has shown that, on a substantial number of occasions, both original and duplicate prescriptions have been submitted for payment when, in many cases, only one has been dispensed.

The purpose of this letter is to bring this matter to your attention and ask that you review systems within your pharmacy to prevent the receipt and subsequent payment of non-dispensed duplicates.

Some duplicates appear to be related to prescription requests arising from an "Emergency supply at the request of a GP". These requests should be unnecessary as it is the GP's responsibility to supply the prescription within 72 hours of the request.

Systems must be in place for you to track prescriptions which you collect from GP practices at patients' request, or in the exceptional circumstances when you order prescriptions on behalf of patients. Record keeping within the pharmacy must enable you to trace which items have been requested and when they have been received into the pharmacy.

I will also be writing to GP colleagues to bring this issue to their attention and ask that they review their processes to ensure that robust systems are in place within the practice to reduce the number of duplicate prescriptions issued.

Cases of where the original and duplicate prescriptions have been submitted for payment are currently being reviewed by BSO Probity Services. In the future cases may be referred to BSO Counter Fraud Service for investigation.

### **Recommended Actions:**

- Review your system for dealing with emergency supplies at the request of a GP.
- Review your system of record keeping within the pharmacy and when collecting prescriptions from GP practices.
- Review your system for submission of prescriptions to ensure that duplicate prescriptions, which have not been dispensed, are not submitted for payment
- Update SOPs and provide appropriate training to staff as necessary.

Thank you for your co-operation with this.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Brogan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joe Brogan  
Assistant Director of Integrated Care  
Pharmacy and Medicines Management