



Health and Social
Care Board

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To:

All Community Pharmacies
cc All GP Practices

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09 March 2017

Dear Colleague,

Patient Reminder Note for Special Order Medicines

A recent adverse event has highlighted the need to ensure that patients are aware of the importance of ordering non-stock medicines well in advance to allow pharmacies enough time to have them delivered before any doses are missed.

The recent incident concerned a delay in obtaining a specialist antiepileptic medication which was prescribed on an HS21 form for a child. Due to a wholesaler error which resulted in an incorrect product being delivered to the pharmacy and the subsequent delay in getting the correct medication, the child missed two doses. The community pharmacy was unaware of this at the time as the parents of the child did not indicate how urgently they required the medication. This delay resulted in the child being hospitalised following a seizure.

The review of this incident by the pharmacy and the HSCB has highlighted the need for:

- Patients to be made aware of the importance of ordering their medication in a timely manner to ensure that they have enough medication to allow the pharmacy to reorder supplies and avoid any missed doses.

- Pharmacies to communicate effectively with patients or their representatives that it may take several days to acquire a product not routinely stocked by wholesalers.

This is particularly important where there are known supply issues with the medicines concerned. There may be occasions when the delay in supply warrants referring the patient back to their GP for consideration of an alternative product.

Action for Community Pharmacies:

A specific 'Special Order Medicine' reminder form has been developed to help community pharmacies communicate to patients the need to allow additional time to source non-stock products (see below). This form can be downloaded from the BSO website:

[Special Order Medicines Form](#)

I would be grateful if you could consider using this or a similar resource to highlight this issue to patients where appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Brogan', written in a cursive style.

Joe Brogan
Assistant Director of Integrated Care
Pharmacy & Medicines Management

Special Order Medicine

The medication you have been prescribed by your GP is not normally stocked by the pharmacy.
We will order it in for you but it may take up to ____ days for it to be delivered to us

Medication:

It is your responsibility to make sure that you always have a supply of your prescription medicines. Please order your next prescription BEFORE your medicines run out and allow enough time for your GP to issue your prescription AND your community pharmacist to order in your medicines.

Speak to your pharmacist and GP if you are unsure how long you need to give them.

It is important that you do not stop taking medicines that have been prescribed for you without first talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

**Pharmacy
Address &
Phone
Number:**

Date Ordered by Pharmacy: _____

Name of Pharmacy Contact:

Date expected: _____

Form to be completed by the pharmacy and given to the patient along with verbal clarification so that the patient understands there may be a possible delay in obtaining their medicine.

Special Order Medicine

The medication you have been prescribed by your GP is not normally stocked by the pharmacy.
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