

To: All GPs & Community Pharmacists

Tel : 028 9536 3926
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www.hscboard.hscni.net

15th November 2019

Dear Colleague,

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR HOLIDAY PERIOD 2019: MANAGING REQUESTS FOR REPEAT MEDICATION

Six weeks to go until Christmas!

Requests by patients for emergency supplies of routine repeat medicines have a significant impact on the workload of the GP Out of Hours (OOH) service. It is one of the top 5 reasons why patients contact the OOH service. **This becomes more problematic over the Christmas and New Year holiday period.** It also impacts community pharmacists as patients frequently request supplies of prescription-only medicines (POMs) without having a valid prescription.

This year, the HSCB is again requesting GP practices and Community Pharmacies to be proactive in encouraging and reminding patients to allow sufficient time to order / collect their repeat prescription and have it dispensed prior to the **Christmas and New Year** holiday period. This is to help prevent patients putting undue pressure on the OOH service to issue prescriptions for repeat medicines, or on community pharmacists to issue emergency supplies of medication.

Options:

1. Display a poster in the surgery and community pharmacy (samples, amend as required – appendices 1 & 2).
2. Identify patients whose repeat prescription is due for re-order and dispensing over the Christmas and New Year holiday period. **If they normally get 28 days supply, then these patients may order their next repeat prescription during w/c 25th November 2019 or w/c 2nd December 2019.** Attach a patient information leaflet (samples, amend

as required – appendices 3 & 4) to repeat prescriptions issued / dispensed during this time period.

3. Put a message onto the right-hand side of the prescription of those patients whose repeat prescription is due over the holiday period.

4. Put a message onto the practice's LED notice board or on-line repeat prescription ordering system if available, encouraging patients to re-order in good time.


5. Display the patient information leaflet called 'Your Medicines Your Responsibility' in the surgery and community pharmacy. This leaflet is available in the patient zone of the NI formulary website: <http://niformulary.hscni.net/PatientZone/SC/YMYR/Pages/default.aspx>

Your support and co-operation is appreciated. We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely,



Joe Brogan
Assistant Director of Integrated Care
Head of Pharmacy and Medicines
Management



Dr Margaret O'Brien
Assistant Director of Integrated Care
Head of General Medical Services

Christmas & New Year Holidays



The surgery will be **closed** on:

- **Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th December 2019**
- **Wednesday 1st January 2019**

Please ensure you order your repeat prescription in good time, to ensure you do not run out of your medicines when the surgery is closed

Christmas & New Year Holidays



This pharmacy will be **closed** on:

- **Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th December 2019**
- **Wednesday 1st January 2019**

Please ensure you order your repeat prescription in good time, and have it dispensed, to ensure you do not run out of your medicines when the pharmacy is closed

Christmas and New Year Holidays 2019

The surgery will be **closed** on:

- Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th December 2019 (reopens again on Friday 27th December).
- Wednesday 1st January 2020 (reopens again on Thursday 2nd January).

According to our records, your repeat prescription is due for reorder over the holiday period. Please ensure you order your repeat prescription, collect it from the surgery and have it dispensed by your pharmacist in good time, to ensure you do not run out of your medicines when the surgery and your local pharmacy is closed.



Christmas and New Year Holidays 2019

This pharmacy will be **closed** on:

- Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th December 2019 (reopens again on Friday 27th December).
- Wednesday 1st January 2020 (reopens again on Thursday 2nd January).

According to our records, your repeat prescription is due over the holiday period. Please ensure you order your repeat prescription, collect it from the surgery and have it dispensed by the pharmacy in good time, to ensure you do not run out of your medicines when the surgery and pharmacy is closed.

