

To:  
All GP Practices  
All Community Pharmacists  
GP Federation Leads  
Glynis McMurtry (for Cascade to GP  
pharmacists)  
ICP leads

Tel : 028 9536 3926  
Fax : 028 9536 3126  
[www.hscboard.hscni.net](http://www.hscboard.hscni.net)

28<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Dear Colleague

## **ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF REPEAT PRESCRIPTION REQUESTS**

As you will be aware, COVID-19 has presented the wider Health and Social Care system with its greatest challenge since inception and there have been unprecedented demands on both GP and Community Pharmacy services, especially with regards to prescriptions. This is illustrated by an increase of 20% in March 2020 in the number of prescription items dispensed (over 4 million items).

A workshop was arranged with stakeholders (GPC, CPNI, Federation Pharmacists and HSCB) on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020 to review the arrangements around repeat prescribing during COVID-19. As a result of this, guidance has now been agreed for GPs and Community Pharmacists (see attached).

The guidance covers the following areas:

- Arrangements for ordering prescriptions
- Management of inappropriate requests for prescriptions
- Prescription collection arrangements from GP practices
- Quantities on prescriptions/repeat prescription intervals
- Faxing, phoning or email of prescriptions
- Management of queries between Community Pharmacy and GP practice

It is recognised that ePrescribing will help to resolve a number of these issues however will not be in place for some time; HSCB continues to progress work on this as a priority.

### **Actions for GP practices and Community Pharmacies:**

- Please share this letter and guidance with all relevant staff, including locums

- Review your existing arrangements for each stage of the prescription management process. A checklist is available as part of the guidance document for GP practices to consider using to review arrangements
- Ensure any required changes are included in written repeat prescribing protocols/SOPs and that revised documentation is shared with, and signed by, relevant staff
- Communication to patients, carers and Care Homes of arrangements should be undertaken where necessary e.g. about any changes to existing arrangements
- Regular communication between GP practices and local Community Pharmacies should continue, and is strongly encouraged under the current circumstances.

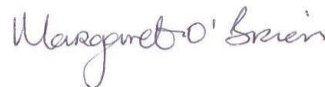
For further information, please refer to HSCB guidance on repeat prescription management.

If you have any queries, please contact a Pharmacy Adviser in your local HSCB office.

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 GMS**

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<b>Contact Details for Local Integrated Care Offices:</b>				
<b>Belfast</b>	<b>South Eastern</b>	<b>Southern</b>	<b>Northern</b>	<b>Western</b>
12-22 Linenhall Street Belfast BT2 8BS	12-22 Linenhall Street Belfast BT2 8BS	Tower Hill Armagh. BT61 9DR	County Hall 182 Galgorm Road Ballymena BT42 1QB	Gransha Park House 15 Gransha Park Clooney Road Londonderry BT47 6FN
Tel: 028 9536 3926	Tel: 028 9536 3926	Tel: 028 9536 2104	Tel: 028 9536 2812	Tel: 028 9536 1082
<a href="mailto:pharmacyservicesbelfast@hscni.net">pharmacyservicesbelfast@hscni.net</a>	<a href="mailto:pharmacyservicesse@hscni.net">pharmacyservicesse@hscni.net</a>	<a href="mailto:pharmacyservicesouth@hscni.net">pharmacyservicesouth@hscni.net</a>	<a href="mailto:pharmacyservicesnorth@hscni.net">pharmacyservicesnorth@hscni.net</a>	<a href="mailto:pharmacyserviceswest@hscni.net">pharmacyserviceswest@hscni.net</a>