

To: All GPs & Community Pharmacists

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www.hscboard.hscni.net3rd December 2020

Dear Colleague,

**CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR HOLIDAY PERIOD 2020: MANAGING
REQUESTS FOR REPEAT MEDICATION***One month until Christmas!*

Each year, the HSCB requests that GP practices and Community Pharmacies encourage and remind patients to allow sufficient time to order their repeat prescription and have it dispensed prior to the Christmas and New Year holiday period. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is even more important this year that patients plan ahead. **Patient should order their repeat prescription at least 7 days in advance of when it is due.**

This year HSCB is launching a social media campaign aimed at encouraging patients to order repeat prescriptions 7 days in advance. Press releases will be issued to local media outlets to reinforce this message. It is anticipated that this will help prevent patients putting undue pressure on out-of-hours medical services to issue prescriptions for repeat medicines, or on community pharmacists to issue emergency supplies of medication.

Options for GP practices and Community Pharmacies to reinforce this message include:

1. Display a poster in the GP practice or 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. 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. Share information via the GP practice or Community Pharmacy website, or social media.

5. Practices to put a message on the on-line repeat prescription ordering system if available, encouraging patients to re-order 7 days in advance.

Your continued support and co-operation through what has been a very difficult year has been greatly appreciated and we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a peaceful Christmas and 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 GMS

Encs.