

Guidance for managing acute prescriptions for care home residents (where there is an urgent need)

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Guidance for managing acute prescriptions for care home residents (Where there is an urgent need.)

This guidance is intended to help ensure that patients in care homes receive urgent, acute medication in a timely manner.

For prescriptions written at the practice

Practice/prescriber must inform the care home that an urgent prescription has been issued in order to treat a resident. Practice reception staff should also be made aware.

- Communicating the urgent prescription to the **pharmacy**:
 1. **If faxed from the practice** – prior to faxing, the community pharmacy should be contacted to confirm that they are able to deliver the medication to the care home in a timely manner; this should be documented by the practice. The pharmacy should also confirm receipt of the fax. (Note, prescriptions for controlled drugs cannot be dispensed from a fax).
 2. **If the pharmacy collects the prescription from the practice** - the pharmacy should sign a receipt for the collection of the prescription and confirm they are able to deliver it in a timely manner.

In both cases the practice must inform the pharmacy of the urgent nature of this acute prescription.

- Communicating the urgent prescription to the **care home**:

Staff at the care home should be made aware of the following details:

 - Patient name,
 - Reason for treatment,
 - Details of delivery/collection (e.g. name of the community pharmacy).

For prescriptions written at the care home

- Communicating the urgent prescription to the **pharmacy**:

The care home should phone the pharmacy informing them of the urgent nature of this acute prescription and confirming that the medication can be delivered in a timely manner before faxing the prescription.

Additional Recommendations:

- Safe Haven procedures should be followed when faxing prescriptions.
- **Care homes should take appropriate action if the prescription/medication does not arrive in the expected time frame.**
- Where practicable, when prescribing antibiotics, the prescriber should check if there is a previous history of MRSA or Clostridium difficile. If so, contact the microbiologist.
- EPS prescriptions are not recommended for urgent prescriptions as they present special risks, e.g. there may be a delay in downloading the prescription; the nominated pharmacy may be closed; the prescription may not be identifiable as being an urgently needed acute item.