

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Where are you based and who will I be speaking to?

- We are based in Devizes in Wiltshire and we are employed directly by NHS Wiltshire CCG. Our team of trained repeat prescription co-ordinators all work under direct supervision of a fully qualified Pharmacist at all times.

Do I have to register with the service?

- There is no need to register with this service, simply call us when you have 7 days of medication left.

What hours are you open and when is the best time to call?

- We are open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays).
- **Wednesdays and Thursdays are our quietest days.** We routinely answer over 900 calls on Mondays and between 500 and 600 on other days of the week, so if you can avoid Mondays you will find it easier to get through.
- In general afternoons are usually quieter than mornings however we are unable to accurately predict call volumes as it can vary depending on patient demand.

Will I have to pay for the telephone call?

- All numbers that start with 03 are charged at the same rate as standard landline numbers that start with '01' or '02'. The only difference is 03 numbers are not linked to a geographic location. If your phone tariff offers inclusive calls to landlines, calls to 0300 numbers will also be included in the same way. If you are unsure, please refer to your call package information or contact your current telephone provider for further information.

How long will it take to order my medication?

- The call will take only a few minutes. In order to ensure your medication is ready for you to collect, **please allow 7 days until you collect your medication.** Once you have ordered your prescription, it will be sent to your GP practice for signing, then electronically (in most cases) sent to your chosen pharmacy or appliance contractor to dispense.

When can I call to order medication?

- **Please call when you have 7 days of medication left.** This is important as the POD has been set-up to help reduce the waste associated with stockpiling of medication. Once you have ordered your prescription, it will be sent to your GP practice for signing, then electronically (in most cases) sent to your chosen pharmacy or appliance contractor to dispense.

What if I cannot call on the correct day, or cannot get through when I need to order?

- We ask you to call when you have 7 days left, however we appreciate that it may not always be possible to ring on the exact day, so this can be discussed when you call our POD team.

What if I cannot use a phone within your opening hours or I am unable to use the telephone?

- **You can register to order your medication online.** In order to do this, you will need to contact your GP practice directly, and usually take some form of identification to obtain a username and password. Once this has been set up, you will be able to order your medication at your own convenience.

What if I or my relative does not have online access?

- Not all patients will be able to use POD or online. Please discuss your individual circumstances with your GP practice who will be able to advise you on alternative ways to order your medication

Can I order on behalf of someone else?

- This is possible if you know exactly what it is they require and they are happy for the POD to access their medical records. Please obtain their permission before calling.
- The POD does ask to speak to the patient briefly if this is likely to happen on a regular basis to confirm they are happy for you to order on their behalf and for the POD to access their medical records. The POD is then able to make a note of this for future orders.

Why can't my pharmacy order for me like they used to?

- Prescription Ordering Direct (POD) is for patients to order medication directly. This means that you will be able to check what medicines you have in stock at home at the time of ordering and ensure that you only order what you need.

Will my pharmacy still send me a text message or deliver?

- Ordering via the POD should not affect either of these services as they are delivered by your pharmacy. Please discuss these with your pharmacy for further information.

How do I order my stoma / continence appliances ?

- You are able to order all prescriptions via POD and can notify us where you would like the prescriptions to be sent for dispensing

Will my doctor still know what I am ordering?

- All prescriptions are sent electronically for your GP to sign so they will be aware of all requests for medication via POD

Why has this service been set up?

- NHS Wiltshire CCG wastes £2.7 million pounds each year on unused medicines. This has been calculated from an audit of hundreds of repeat prescription requests received by practices across Wiltshire. Patients were asked how much medication they had at home and whether they needed what was being requested.
- All unused medication returned to pharmacies has to be incinerated as it cannot be reused. Stockpiling medication increases waste as if there are any changes to your medication, it will need to be returned for destruction. By ensuring patients only order what they need, we are able to reduce this waste and reduce the overall cost on prescriptions.
- It has also been set up to improve the efficiency of repeat prescription services for practices using the POD and to reduce GP involvement where possible.

Why didn't I know about this before?

- This is a new service which started in May 2017 and is gradually rolling out across practices in Wiltshire. Your practice or community pharmacy will provide you with information on how to use the POD.

What if I have completely run out of my medication or am going on holiday?

- We do ask you to give the POD a call when you have 7 days' worth of medication left to reduce the likelihood of running out of medication, however we do understand that sometimes this is not possible. Same day prescription requests put extra pressure on your GP so all requests will be reviewed so only urgent requests are expedited. For example if the medication is available to buy over the counter, you will be signposted to your local pharmacy. The POD call handler will be able to give you an idea of when it may be reasonable for you to expect your medication. Remember, the pharmacy also has to have the medication in stock.
- If you are going away on holiday, you will need to let the POD know and they will be able to advise you further. This is not usually an issue.