**SOP006: Patient Requesting Repeat Prescription Early**

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| **Purpose** | How to identify a patient who is ordering their repeat prescriptions early and the steps to follow in each of the scenarios. |
| **Scope** | This was created to cover the processing of early prescription requests and also covers issuing prescriptions to cover a holiday supply. |
| **For the use of** | Enter your preferences here. |

**Always check the Expected next issue located under template details (bottom left-hand corner)**

**If this is earlier than the date stated, review the steps below to decide what action to take.**

**The following considerations should be made when items are being ordered early.**

1. Review the repeat template to ensure that the directions and quantity being prescribed aligns with the set issue duration, to check that the patient is receiving the correct quantity to cover the set duration.
2. Consider the previous order pattern if ordering up to three days early. Is previous order pattern 28/56 days between issues?
3. Consider if patient is ordering on a Thursday/Friday, but items are due on the Monday/Tuesday – it may be prudent to allow the request to avoid busy days after weekend.

POD allow a **10-day** supply as a buffer.

1. Is this the second ever issue of the item? The patient will need to order early this time to gain a buffer.
2. Is the patient going on holiday or working offshore and will be away when their next prescription is due? Or are they away for a longer period, so need extra supply of medication?

Check with the patient when they are going away and how long for, in some cases it may also be appropriate to check if they are traveling abroad.

If they are:

* **Going away for less than three months in the UK** – You may choose to issue medication early or at an increased quantity to cover. There is also the option for patients to collect medication at the normal issue date from a pharmacy at their location within the UK. You can use a one-off nomination to set this up.
* **Going abroad for less than three months** – Quantity of medication can be amended and issued to cover the trip. (Bear in mind some medications need frequent monitoring and it may not be appropriate to prescribe larger quantities).
* **Going abroad for more than three months** – NHS guidelines suggest patients should only be prescribed a maximum of three months’ supply of medication in exceptional circumstances. If patients require more than this, they must obtain this from the location they are staying.

 Use the information gathered from the patient to issue a suitable supply:

* Amend the quantity on repeat to the quantity needed to cover the trip.

 For example, amend from 28 to 56 if the patient is going to be away for 6 weeks. The issue duration does not need to be amended.

* Record and give the patient the approximate date they will be next due to order their prescription.
* Once amended, issue the item, and amend again to return to original quantity.
1. Patient is ordering items early that are set to a 30 or 60 day supply, regularly with other items on a 28/56 day supply, such as preventer inhalers. For example, Braltus inhaler has a specific pack size of 30.

Consider changing the issue duration of these items to a 28/56 days supply so it does not flag as early each time and can be issued in line with other medications. This will then be issued a maximum of 12 times in one year due to accruing extra by ordering early each month.

1. If patient is ordering more than three days early and the reason for the early request is not obvious or they give no valid reason, then decline the request. Explain your reason for declining the medication and ask the patient to call back when they have 10 days’ supply or less left. If they have a valid reason, process the request by: <Insert your process here>

At POD we would highlight this via a patient request, detailing reason. For example patient ‘has lost medication’ or ‘has less than a seven-day supply left’

1. Be mindful of repetitive early ordering, this will be evident in the days between issues at the bottom of the screen and highlight this as appropriate. This could indicate several issues and should be queried with the patient to ascertain the reasons for continual early ordering.

**Version Control**

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| **Date**  | **Version Number** | **Change Made** |
| 25/4/2024 | v1 | New SOP |
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