NHS
Ipswich and East Suffolk
Clinical Commissioning Group

Position Statement on the Issuing of 7 Day Prescriptions

The appropriate duration of a prescription should be decided by the prescriber, in conjunction with the patient, taking into account the medicine being prescribed, it's monitoring requirements, the condition being treated and the individual patient's needs. In short, 7 day prescriptions should only be issued by a prescriber when a patient has a clinical need for their medication to be supplied on a weekly basis.

When is it appropriate to issue 7 day prescriptions?

- Unstable patients whose medication regimen may be susceptible to frequent change.
- Patients who are considered to be at risk of medication overuse and it is not safe to provide longer than a 7 day supply.
- When a patient is having a monitored dosage system (MDS) and it contains medication that is very unstable and therefore means that the monitored dosage system has to be made up and collected each week.

When is it inappropriate to issue 7 day prescriptions?

- Where no clinical assessment has taken place by the prescriber.
- Where there is no clinical reason for the patient to only receive a one week supply at a time.
- To support the provision of a MDS unless there is a clinical need for the patient to receive their medication on a weekly basis (as listed above).
- When a direct request for 7 day prescriptions is made by community pharmacists to support the provision of an MDS and where there is no clinical reason for the patient not to receive a 28 day supply.

Supply of Monitored Dosage Systems (MDS)

- The provision of a "reasonable adjustment" to support the patient with their medication is based on the clinical judgement of the assessing pharmacist / dispenser and it may include the provision of MDS. Before making a supply in MDS, it is essential that the pharmacist satisfies themself that the patient will be able to use the MDS safely.
- The decision to supply an MDS should take into account any concerns from health care professionals of the patient's ability to take their medication and should be undertaken following an assessment by the dispensing pharmacist / dispenser with reference to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).
- Where a prescription for 28 days treatment is issued for a patient who satisfies the DDA criteria and it is decided that the adjustment required is an MDS, then 4 x 7 day MDS containers or 1 x 28 day MDS container should be prepared and supplied to the patient at the same time.
- Where 7 day prescriptions are issued, the patient must receive medication weekly and there must be a genuine need for this as listed above.
- MDS should only be provided to meet the clinical needs of the patient, not primarily the needs of a care home or care agency. Support for care homes or other care agencies should not be funded by (prescription) dispensing fees. There is no NHS contractual requirement on community pharmacists or GPs to deliver medications to patients' homes although some pharmacies / dispensing practices may offer to do this as a business decision.

Practical ways to support patients

Please note that prescribers and pharmacists may choose from a variety of aids to assist patients or careers who have difficulty managing medications. These include:

- Large print medicine labels
- Special easy opening medication containers
- A reminder chart showing the particular times to take the appropriate medicines
- MDS boxes containing 1 week or 4 week supply when identified as the only reasonable adjustment required to overcome the obstacles to the use of the dispensed medicine.

Detailed guidance is available on the link below
http://psnc.org.uk/contract-it/pharmacy-regulation/dda/the-equality-act-2010-28-day-prescribing/