THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART IN THE COMMUNITY PHARMACY GREEN BAG SCHEME  A SIMPLE WAY TO HELP PREVENT MISSED DOSES, MEDICINE ERRORS AND WASTE

Green bag scheme
Green Bags are heavy duty plastic bags designed for patients to use to carry all their medicines when transferring from one care setting to another e.g. home to hospital, hospital to care home or to bring them in to the community pharmacy for a MUR. The bags are printed with some useful information for patients. It is important for patients to take all their medicines with them when they are transferring from one care setting to another as this greatly reduces the risk of mistakes being made and critical medicines being omitted or delayed. Also, medicines are reused wherever possible to reduce medicine waste. Green bags are a simple, low cost intervention. Costs of the scheme are quickly recovered even with modest patient numbers.

Surrey and Sussex - are you part of the scheme?
More than 200 community pharmacies across Surrey and Sussex now support the green bag scheme. Pharmacies provide the bags and information to patients about taking their medicines to hospital with them. Any pharmacy can participate, so please check your stock levels or if you have not already signed up, please get in touch, details below. Community pharmacies are just one of the places where green bags are being promoted. The local Ambulance Trust, GP Out Of Hours services, and Acute and Community NHS Trusts also have green bags to give to patients.

Green bag supplies
All the acute hospitals in Surrey and Sussex support the green bag scheme with funding for supplies of the bags and patient information. Working with the Pharmacy Local Professional Network, we are trying to establish a reliable supply route so pharmacies can easily re-order what they need. Currently Paydens, Kamsons and Day Lewis have agreed to hold stocks of bags and distribute them to their pharmacies. Other pharmacies can order through the email address below.

If you or your organisation can offer any other distribution ideas or help please do let us know.

Brighton and Hove
The GPs and CCG in Brighton and Hove are actively promoting green bags to improve medicines safety and reduce waste. ALL pharmacies in Brighton and Hove have supplies of the green bags, and they have also been publicised to local patient groups and care homes. Results of an audit last year showed that at least three patients each day newly admitted to Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals brought their medicines with them in a green bag provided by this scheme.

When to offer green bags
Here are a few suggestions of opportunities to offer green bags:
• MURs or NMS
• Patients that may be admitted to hospital in an emergency e.g. with COPD
• Patients who tell you they are going into hospital for a planned procedure
• Patients you deliver to who are frail and elderly
• Care homes you supply

Green bag supplies
Any pharmacy wanting to take part or needing more bags should e mail: greenbag.sps@nhs.net
Any queries or problems contact:
Carina Livingstone at (07909 000283) carina.livingstone@nhs.net or Sue Overton (01903 708042) sue.overton2@nhs.net