



## Repeat Prescription Ordering Service

### Background

It had been previously estimated that approximately £3.5-5 million pounds of medicines in Northamptonshire were being discarded each year. Local audit data indicated that a significant proportion of this was as a result of over ordering of repeat prescriptions. Whilst there had been previous initiatives to address the medicine waste issue, following the success of Luton and Coventry CCGs in reducing their “medicines waste” by limiting third party ordering of repeat prescriptions, it was felt that this approach should be adopted locally. Commencing in February 2018, 69 of 71 GP practices in Northamptonshire CCGs started implementing a system whereby they limited routinely accepting repeat prescription orders from third parties. The following is a brief summary of the main outcomes from implementing this change.

### Results

- **Prescribing costs:** Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, prescribing costs for the non-participating practices within Northamptonshire CCGs increased by 0.38% compared to the previous financial year, whereas prescribing costs for the participating practices decreased by 1.70%, therefore showing a reduction of 2.08%.
- **Items:** The number of items in Nene and Corby in the same time period for non-participating practices increased by 0.31%, whereas the number of items in the live practices decreased by 1.38%, therefore showing a reduction of 1.69%.
- **Quality:** There have been improvements in patient safety as fewer patients have less unnecessary medicines in their home.
- **Online services:** Between the pilot practices going live and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, there was a 10.8% increase in the number of patients who registered for this service, compared to a 7.8% increase nationally.
- **Total savings:** Total savings in Nene and Corby for the project based on the data are £878,705 and the total reduction in items based on the data is 113,514. These reductions take into account when the practices went live throughout the year. When extrapolated, full year savings would be closer to £1.8 million. A significant proportion of these savings will be recurrent each year.
- **Complaints/queries:** A significant number of queries were received in the early phases of implementation; this was expected as it was a significant change in ordering processes for the majority of patients, however, following support, it would appear that patients were accepting of the change as only 18 patients subsequently contacted the CCGs to complain. It is understood that all of these were suitably resolved.

Thank you

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all GP Practice and Community Pharmacy staff for their co-operation in successfully implementing this project.

### Moving forward

Practices should continue to not routinely accept repeat prescription requests from third parties unless a patient has a specific need, in which case, this should be read coded as “XaaYT Pharmacy managed repeats”. If you would like to read the Repeat Prescription Ordering Service Report in full, please contact Sue Barron (susan.barron@nhs.net).

#### Disclaimer

Information in this newsletter is believed to be accurate and true. NHS Nene CCG and NHS Corby CCG employees accept no liability for loss of any nature, to persons, organisations or institutions that may arise as a result of any errors or omissions.