

Please stay 2 metres apart

SAVE LIVES

2 metres (6ft or 3 steps)



Coronavirus - COVID-19  
Stay at home. Protect the  
NHS. Save lives!

**healthwatch**  
Brighton and Hove

## Coronavirus (Covid-19) Collecting prescriptions

Should you have any questions or require further information please contact us by email: [office@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk](mailto:office@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk)

### Prescriptions

During the national lockdown for coronavirus, the government funded all community pharmacies to provide a medicines delivery service. These medicines deliveries were for those patients who needed it most, i.e. those who were shielding and had no-one to collect medicines for them. The government's shielding support package ended on 31st July 2020. This will also bring the national pharmacy medicines delivery service to a close.

#### Advice for patients:

- Some pharmacies may choose to continue to fund a delivery service themselves, but this might be restricted to certain patients. Your local pharmacy will tell you if it is doing this. Or you can ask them. You can also check the NHS website "Find a Pharmacy Service" (<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-pharmacy>). This location-based service lists all pharmacies nearby. Each entry has a tab called 'Departments and Services'. If the pharmacy provides a delivery service, it should be listed here. Patients will need to check with their pharmacy if this is a free service, or not, and be prepared to pay a small fee for this service.
- The vast majority of pharmacies will need to stop providing free deliveries. Pharmacies can and will support patients to access their medicines in other ways - for example by giving medicines to patients' friends or relatives, or helping patients to source volunteers to collect medicines for them
- **Instead, patients are being advised to:**
  - **ask a friend or relative to collect their medicines for them**
  - **call NHS Volunteer Responders on 0808 196 3646(8am to 8pm) to arrange support, or**
  - **contact their pharmacy or their local council to find a local volunteer.**

You can read this [briefing note](#) to pharmacies which describes how the service began operating again from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020, or [this letter from NHS England](#).



## Collections made by friends and family

Many people are kindly supporting others by collecting their prescriptions. Before you start collecting and dropping-off medicines to patients' homes, it is important to understand how to undertake your tasks safely and effectively. This is key to protecting patient safety and confidentiality.

This guide provides top tips for safely collecting and picking up prescriptions for a friend, family member or neighbour, and you can download a helpful poster [here](#):

- ✓ Only collect for up to two patients at a time.
- ✓ Go to the right pharmacy.
- ✓ Know the name and address of the person you are collecting for. It may also save time in the pharmacy if you know what medicine(s) you are expecting.
- ✓ Please don't be offended if the pharmacist asks for ID or cannot hand over certain medicines. Please ensure you have appropriate ID with you, such as your driving licence or your letter of authority/volunteer ID from the Council.
- ✓ Ask the patient if they pay for their prescription - it's £9.15 per prescription item (they may be able to pay for the medication over the phone if the pharmacy offers this service, though not all do). If the patient doesn't pay, ask which 'exemption' applies to them.
- ✓ Medicine deliveries must be completed on the same day that you collect them from the pharmacy, and within the opening hours of the pharmacy. Any medicines that cannot be delivered must be returned to the pharmacy that day; you must not store other peoples' medicines overnight in your own home or fridge.
- ✓ Do not open the prescription package. If medicine packages split, or there's a breakage, call the pharmacy team immediately for their advice. It is likely you will have to return to the pharmacy in this situation.
- ✓ Do not deliver medicines to anyone other than the patient without first obtaining patient consent to do so.
- ✓ Where possible, place the medication on the doorstep, ring the bell / knock on the door and stand back to wait for an answer. **REMEMBER: NEVER LEAVE MEDICATION UNATTENDED**



- ✓ When the door is answered, explain that you have a prescription to deliver and ask the person to confirm the name and address of the patient, to ensure you have the correct address and that the patient lives there.
- ✓ If a patient does not answer the door, please return the medicines back to the pharmacy; do not leave the medicines outside the house, with a neighbour or post the medicines through the letter box.
- ✓ To avoid the potential for confusion, you must also complete all deliveries from a single pharmacy before picking up further prescriptions for delivery from another pharmacy.
- ✓ Some patients may have more than one package of medicines. Check with the pharmacy the number of packages for each patient on collection and ensure that all bags of medicines are delivered.
- ✓ Sometimes the pharmacy may not have all the medicines needed or the full quantity ordered on the prescription. When this happens, the pharmacy will issue an 'Owings Slip'. It is important that you pass this 'Owings Slip' onto the patient and advise them that these items will be delivered when the pharmacy has the items back in stock.
- ✓ If you have concerns for a patient's wellbeing call the pharmacy team for assistance and guidance. In emergency situations dial 999.
- ✓ Avoid pharmacies if you are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
- ✓ Ask the pharmacist for advice if you are not sure about anything.

## REMEMBER

- Most pharmacies are open and repeat prescriptions should be available as usual.
- Medicines should only be requested when they are running low (e.g. one week's supply left). It can however take between 5 and 7 days from ordering a repeat prescription from a GP to it being ready to collect at the pharmacy.
- When you visit a pharmacy, you may be asked to queue outside if the pharmacist is operating a 'one-in-one-out' system.

Patients are encouraged to apply for repeat prescriptions online or by phone. The advice for patients is as follows:



**By phone.** If your GP is signed up, you may be able to order your prescription by using the [Prescription On Demand](#) service. This service is provided on behalf of GP practices by NHS Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group. You can check if your practice is signed up to this service by clicking [here](#)

**Online.** Many GPs allow you to order prescriptions online. You should first check whether you have already registered for this service or not. If not, you will need to confirm with your GP practice that they offer this service and then register for it (you should be able to do this over the phone).

### Patients who are vulnerable or shielding

- You can request urgent help (with shopping, collecting prescriptions etc) for yourself or someone else by calling the Council on 01273 293117, or you can [click here](#)
- People who have been advised to shield themselves (i.e. stay at home) from the coronavirus can self-refer to the NHS Volunteer Responder Programme via telephone (0808 196 3646) or online by clicking on this [new site](#)
- In the first instance, it is best to ask friends, relatives, and neighbours to collect/pick up medicines on your behalf. If this is not possible contact the local Council. NHS Volunteers (called 'Responders') and local community support can help with delivering medicines from pharmacies. We advise you to check with your local pharmacist that it is OK for someone to collect your prescriptions on your behalf first.
- Many pharmacies will continue to deliver to your door but may charge for this service. You should ask your usual / local pharmacist whether they offer this service.

### Blister packs

- We understand that delivery of blister packs is not affected by the government announcement and will continue as planned.
- At this busy time, some pharmacies are prioritising the issue of blister packs for the most vulnerable who need them most. This is happening only once a robust assessment of patient need has been undertaken by the community pharmacist taking into account Equality Act 2010 requirements.