

## Prescription management during COVID-19

**Thurrock CCG, and Basildon and Brentwood CCG** in line with national and local guidance recommend the following:

- GP practices to encourage patients to order medication via online services to reduce face to face contact, by using;
  - The NHS App
  - TPP SystmOne App
  - TPP SystmOne online (<https://www.tpp-uk.com/products/systmonline>)
  - Emis Patient Access App
  - Emis Patient access online (<https://app.patientaccess.com/login>)
- GP practices to encourage patients to use the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) to nominate community pharmacies or dispensing appliance contractors to avoid the need to visit the surgery to collect prescriptions or tokens. Please refer to EPS resources on the CCG website.
- GP practices to map all medication including controlled drugs (CDs) to enable these to be sent electronically. Please refer to 'Preparing for EPS' resource: <https://www.thurrockccg.nhs.uk/about-us/document-library/medicines-management/prescribing/electronic-prescription-service-eps/systmone/5573-ccg-electronic-prescription-service-eps-preparing-for-eps/file>
- GP practices to transition suitable patients to Electronic Repeat Dispensing (eRD) as soon as possible to relieve long term pressure. Please refer to eRD resources on the CCG website.
- GP practices to ensure they adhere to the 28 day prescribing policy. The CCG do not recommend increasing the duration of prescribed medications during COVID-19. Prescribing higher quantities may affect the fragile supply chain and increases the number of patients stockpiling medicines, which in turn creates further stock and supply shortages, and unnecessary waste. Please refer to 28 day prescribing policy on the CCG website.
- The above is consistent with the advice provided to GP practices by Medical Director of Primary Care for NHS England and NHS Improvement, Dr Nikki Kanani. A letter sent to GP practices states: *'Practices should not change their repeat prescription durations or support patients trying to stockpile, these actions may put a strain on the supply chain and exacerbate any potential shortages. Practices should consider putting all suitable patients on electronic repeat dispensing as soon as possible. The whole repeatable prescription can be valid for a year but each repeat should be for no longer than the patient has now. For example, if the patient has prescriptions for a month's supply now then the repeat dispensing should be set up as 13 x 28 days' supply.'*
- All our resources for the above can be found on the CCG website under prescribing then
  - Electronic Prescription Service (EPS)
  - Electronic Repeat Dispensing (eRD)
  - Online services
  - Prescription issue duration position statements
  - Managed repeats
  - Waste

Providers commissioned to provide services on behalf of Thurrock CCG, and Basildon and Brentwood CCG are reminded that they are required to follow the local joint formulary and prescribing guidance, or relevant Medicines Management agreement.

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