

ADULT CARE AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**20TH MARCH 2018**

REPORT TITLE	An Independent Review of the Wirral Patient Led Repeat Ordering
REPORT OF	NHS Wirral CCG and Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit Medicines Management and Optimisation Team

REPORT SUMMARY

Nationally an estimated £300 million of NHS prescribed medicines is wasted each year. This highlights the significant cost of unused medicines and the inefficiencies within the repeat prescription process.

Repeat prescriptions represent 60-75% of all prescriptions issued by GPs and 80% of prescribing costs. NHS Wirral CCG spends approximately £60 million on prescribed drugs each year. Out of this around £44 million is spent on repeat prescriptions.

In the Wirral approximately £2.2 million is wasted every year on unused or partially used medication.

In November 2016 NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) piloted the 'patient led repeat ordering' project in eight Wirral GP practices over a five month period.

The aim of the project was to reduce the high cost of wasted medication to the local health economy, to reduce medication stockpiling and to reduce the patient safety risks associated with unwanted medication.

Following positive outcomes from the pilot, NHS Wirral CCG rolled out the project, from April 2017, to all 52 Wirral GP practices.

In June 2017 an update on the project was presented to the Adult Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee who requested that Wirral CCG provide a further report to the Committee in 6 months' time, including patient feedback.

NHS Wirral CCG commissioned Healthwatch Wirral to carry out an independent review of patients experiences of the scheme, findings are to be presented to the committee on 20th March 2018.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Adult Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the contents of this report, provide feedback and any further requirements.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

In June 2017, following a presentation to the Adult Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, NHS Wirral CCG were asked to provide a further report to the Committee in 6 months' time, including patient feedback.

Wirral CCG commissioned Healthwatch Wirral to undertake an independent review to establish the impact of the change in process and to highlight any improvements going forward.

Feedback is requested to ensure that Members are satisfied that the independent review has provided the required evidence needed.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

No other options were requested.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Drivers for Change

3.1.1 The Department of Health released evidence highlighting significant waste and inefficiencies in repeat prescribing - <https://www.nao.org.uk/report/prescribing-costs-in-primary-care/>

Nationally it is estimated:

- £110 million worth of medicines are returned to pharmacies.
- £90 million worth of unused prescriptions are being stored in homes.
- £50 million worth of medicines are disposed of by care homes.
- £150 million worth of medicines waste is avoidable

3.1.2 NHS Wirral CCG spends around £60 million on prescribed drugs each year. Repeat prescriptions represent 60-75% of all prescriptions issued by GPs and 80% of prescribing costs. This equates to an estimated £44 million which is spent on repeat prescriptions.

3.1.3 In the Wirral about £2.2 million is wasted every year on unused or partially used medication.

3.1.4 The successful adoption of the patient led ordering of repeat prescriptions in 2014 by NHS Luton CCG and then in September 2016 by NHS South Sefton CCG and NHS Southport & Formby CCG.

3.2 What is Patient Led Ordering of Repeat Prescriptions?

3.2.1 Many Wirral residents have a 'repeat prescription' meaning that they can regularly receive certain medication without having to see their doctor each time. Some people have always ordered these repeat prescriptions themselves. Others chose to use a pharmacy to order medicines on their behalf. The only change with patient led ordering of repeat prescriptions is that, instead of using the pharmacy, people who are able to will order their repeat medication directly with the practice.

- 3.2.2 Repeat prescription medication can be requested from the practice by a variety of methods including in person, online, via a smartphone app or by post.
- 3.2.3 GP practices no longer accept repeat prescription requests from pharmacies; however, the pharmacy can still collect the prescription and deliver the medication in the usual way.
- 3.2.4 Patients who are unable to order their own repeat medication, for example, if they have dementia or for people who don't have any family or friend support can be excluded from the scheme and the pharmacy is able to order their medication on their behalf.
- 3.2.5 The aim of the change to patient led ordering of repeat prescriptions is to reduce the high cost, to the local health economy associated with medicine waste, to reduce stockpiling and to reduce the safety risk created with unwanted medicines being available in patients' homes.
- 3.2.6 A key benefit is putting patients in charge of ordering their repeat prescription This is because patients are best placed to know of any changes that have been made to their medicines and what medicines they have used in the past month, and can therefore order only what they need.
- 3.2.7 By patients taking control of the medicines they order, they can improve safety issues relating to medicines and reduce medicines waste at a time of significant financial challenge.
- 3.2.8 To summarise patients need to;
- Order their own prescriptions and only order what they need.
 - Check medicines dispensed by the pharmacy or delivery driver, and ask them to take back anything that is not needed.
 - Tell their doctor if they have stopped taking anything on their repeat prescription so the doctor can check if the item should stay on the prescription.
 - Attend review appointments with their pharmacist or doctor to see if their medicines list is still meeting the patient's needs, and is not causing problems or generating waste.

3.3 The Patient Led Ordering of Repeat Prescriptions Pilot

- 3.3.1 The patient led repeat ordering project was piloted by NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in eight Wirral GP practices over a five month period from November 2016 to March 2017.
- 3.3.2 Following the pilot NHS Wirral CCG fully implemented the approach across all Wirral GP practices from April 2017. Outcomes from the pilot showed that the average numbers of items prescribed on a monthly basis, in each pilot practice, after the implementation were significantly reduced compared to the period prior to implementation. On average a total of 2,500 fewer scripts were issued each month within the eight practices meaning that patients were only requesting the repeat medication that they needed. Data showed an overall reduction in growth in dispensed items of around 1.2%.

- 3.3.3 To ensure patient safety support has been provided to practices to help them identify any areas for review. NHS Wirral CCG and Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit Medicines Management and Optimisation Team work very closely with the Wirral Local Pharmaceutical Committee and community pharmacies to improve patient care.
- 3.3.4 In order to analyse the prescribing data and understand the amount of savings achieved during the pilot the prescribing data for the eight practices was compared to a group of non-pilot local practices with a similar patient demographic. These controls showed no growth reduction in the same period. Each practice's average cost per item (obtained from ePACT) was used to estimate a cost saving. The total estimated cost saving achieved across all eight practices was £20,824 per month. This equates to approximately £104,000 for the 5 months of the pilot.
- 3.3.5 To predict the estimated potential cost saving for full implementation across all Wirral practices it is useful to understand that the eight practices involved in the pilot cover 20% of the total Wirral population.
- 3.3.6 The full pilot evaluation, which shows feedback from patients, GP practice staff and community pharmacies, is available on the NHS Wirral CCG website at: <https://www.wirralccg.nhs.uk/media/3793/final-patient-led-repeat-ordering-pilot-evaluation-oct-2017v3final.pdf>.

3.4 Stakeholder Engagement

- 3.4.1 NHS Wirral CCG supported GP practices during implementation by providing a selection of resources for practices to use. This included an implementation checklist, patient leaflets, suggested text for the practice website, key contact list and documentation to support the communication with community pharmacies.
- 3.4.2 Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit Medicines Management and Optimisation Team supported GP practices with in-depth staff training to ensure that all staff were fully aware of the change in process.
- 3.4.3 Practices were advised to inform their patients of the change in process, at least a month before the change occurred. Methods of communication included: sending a text message to those patients with mobile numbers on record, by using the patient information leaflets in the GP practice and in local pharmacies, by asking the pharmacy staff to inform patients verbally and by giving out leaflets with prescriptions. The practices also used the television screens in the waiting room, posters, practice websites and reception and clinical staff to inform patients. Practices were also advised to consult their own patient participation group to agree the best process for patients.
- 3.4.4 NHS Wirral CCG and Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit Medicines Management and Optimisation Team and NHS Wirral CCG communicated important information to all Wirral pharmacies before and during implementation across Wirral via the Local Pharmaceutical Committee email distribution process. As part of the full implementation across Wirral, the Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit Medicines Management and Optimisation Team carried out face to face visits to all Wirral community

pharmacies to ensure that key messages were communicated to the appropriate people and that the NHS Wirral CCG patient leaflets were delivered.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Summary of Performance of Repeat Ordering from Apr - Dec 1718 against baseline (Apr - Oct 1617) shows a cost avoidance of approximately £438,000.

NHS Wirral CCG will continue to monitor the scheme on a regular basis to review progress.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications as a result of this project.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

The implementation of the patient led repeat ordering scheme is business as usual for practice staff and community pharmacies with the aim of reducing the patient safety risks associated with unwanted medicines in the home.

Anecdotal evidence from practices has shown that, following implementation of this scheme, practice administration staff time has been freed up to focus on other areas of patient care within the practice. One practice states they have saved a total of three days a week in practice staff time which enables the practice to have more staff available on the front desk to deal with patient queries.. This is due to an increase in online repeat medication requests which has resulted in a more efficient process within the practice.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Risk assessments and supporting action plans were developed throughout the course of the pilot and analysed with the project group. NHS Wirral CCG continues to review the scheme following implementation.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Engagement and consultation will continue. A significant amount of work has been carried out to date to ensure patients are aware of the new scheme but following the independent review by Healthwatch Wirral recommendations show that further work is needed to improve the process and support patient care.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

NHS Wirral CCG undertook an Equality Analysis and Quality Impact Assessment as part of the pilot – please see the full pilot evaluation for further information.

10.0 FUTURE ACTIONS

Based on the recommendations from Healthwatch Wirral working group we would suggest the following actions:

- Improved Communication;
 - To establish details of how the practices have implemented the new process within the practice including communication with patients NHS Wirral CCG asked practices to complete a 'repeat prescription ordering implementation report' which will be reviewed. If further communication to patients is required support will be given for this.
 - Practices will be asked to continue to promote the message to patients to 'only order what you need' with an aim of reducing waste within the system.
 - The CCG will continue to communicate with community pharmacies and ensure that practices inform patients of the available pharmacy services including a collection and delivery service if available.
 - Patients who were excluded from the scheme will be reviewed to ensure that they require the pharmacy to order.
 - To ensure that practices are aware the Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit Medicines Management and Optimisation Team can provide medication reviews to patients as needed.

- Online/App Prescription Request Services
 - Support will be given to practices to establish which patients require help with setting up the online/app service which enables prescriptions to be requested without the need to visit the practice.

- Prescription Alignment Support
 - Practices can be provided with a form that patients can complete with support from the practice staff or their local community pharmacy to enable medication quantities to be aligned.

- Electronic Repeat Dispensing – The CCG will promote the national electronic repeat dispensing service which sees GPs approving up to 12 months' worth of repeat prescriptions which are stored at the pharmacy and dispensed monthly.

- Further analysis is required to access ways to improve the financial results. Some other areas have achieved higher outcomes possibly due to the presence of a member of the practice team called a medicines coordinator who has an interest in prescribing and medicines management and who has had specific training to improve their skills in this area. For example - Interim Results from 2 CCGs in Lancs are 4.5% above the expected reduction in items. The difference may be due to the fact that they have Meds coordinators in every practice and maybe they intervene or can encourage their colleagues and staff to ask patients if they need all the items when they call.

- Further patient analysis could include interviews with samples of patients who support and don't support this scheme in order to ascertain areas for improvement.

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APPENDICES

Healthwatch Wirral – Independent Patient Review (January 2018)

REFERENCE MATERIAL

<https://www.nao.org.uk/report/prescribing-costs-in-primary-care/> (accessed on 15th February 2018).

The full pilot evaluation - <https://www.wirralccg.nhs.uk/media/3793/final-patient-led-repeat-ordering-pilot-evaluation-oct-2017v3final.pdf>.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Patient Led Repeat Ordering in Wirral - Adult Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Wednesday 28 th June 2017