

Homecare Medicines Charter

Purpose of this charter

The purpose of this charter is to provide you with information on homecare medicines services.

It will include the steps you will go through and what you can expect if you are new to homecare. It will also explain to you your rights and responsibilities, in line with the NHS constitution principles. The NHS Constitution can be found at <http://www.nhs.uk/choiceintheNHS/Rightsandpledges/NHSConstitution/Pages/Overview.aspx>

1.0 Introduction

If appropriate you may be provided with a homecare service for your medicines which will be ordered by your NHS hospital or clinic. In most cases this will mean your prescribed medicines are delivered directly to your home by a trusted homecare provider. For some it may also involve some level of care taking place in your home administered by a healthcare professional.

1.1 Why homecare has a role in medicines provision

Homecare helps to provide you with treatment you need in your own home without the need to go to a hospital or clinic.

If you have had a stay in hospital, homecare can often help you return home sooner, as well as help you to be independent and give you more personal control. Or, if you regularly need to attend outpatient appointments and day units for repeat prescriptions, homecare will save you time by bringing your treatment directly to you at home.

Not only is this more convenient for you but also helps us to free up appointments as well as hospital beds – meaning we can care for more people.

1.2 How choice applies

You will have the opportunity to discuss how homecare will work for you and you have the right to request specific arrangements about how your medicines and/or medical treatments are delivered, for example on what date and time.

If you require more than one prescribed medicine you can expect the provider to do their utmost to arrange single deliveries - saving you from receiving several deliveries in a week; however this may not always be possible.

Your homecare provider is responsible for making your care arrangements – you can expect them to do their best to accommodate you and your needs however, they cannot guarantee they will be able to specifically cater to your requests. You can expect to have an explanation if your needs cannot be met and you can talk about this with your clinical team if you want to.

2.0 Setting up homecare arrangements

Every patient is entitled to be provided with an understanding of how homecare works and the different processes which are used to provide the service.

2.1 How services are set up

The homecare providers we use are private companies who are registered to provide medicines and related medical treatments.

Exactly who will provide you with your homecare will depend on your individual needs and which companies your hospital uses.

In some instances you may receive a homecare arranged by the company that manufactures your medicine. They will have set up the arrangements through a designated homecare provider so that when your clinical team contacts the homecare provider to give them the details of the medicines you need, they will then arrange the supply. In other cases the arrangements are set up by the hospital or clinic directly with the homecare provider.

In both cases your clinical team will contact the agreed homecare company with your requirements. It is then the homecare company's responsibility to provide your medicine and make delivery arrangements.

It is important that both of these processes are clear to you and that you understand that your confidential medical information will be shared with trusted third parties.

2.2 The role of patients in setting up services – the 'right' to be engaged

You can expect that the most effective process is being used to provide you with your treatment and that relevant patient groups are regularly consulted to make sure the best methods are being used.

2.3 The responsibilities of the hospital team and your GP

As for other aspects of care, the hospital doctor, nurse and pharmacist, as well as other members of the team, have responsibilities to ensure homecare medicine services meet the needs of patients and are set up in line with agreed standards. They also have a responsibility to let your GP know which medicines you are being given.

3.0 Initiating homecare medicines for the individual patient –

This section of the charter will cover what you can expect if you are in need of homecare.

3.1 Clinical decision making – right for explanation, engagement, choice

You will speak with a healthcare professional who will provide you with all the information you feel you need about homecare.

You will have the opportunity to ask the professional any questions you have about the service and you can expect them to answer as best they can.

Every patient is entitled to this and has the right to accept or refuse treatment.

3.2 Registration

After being consulted, you are required to fill out necessary forms to register for homecare.

3.3 Seeking consent, including information

You will also be asked to sign a consent form – this will show that you have understood your healthcare professional, as well as the information provided to you, and that you are happy to start homecare treatment.

By signing the consent form you are agreeing to your medical information being shared with trusted private companies, such as a homecare provider. They will only use the information to help provide that care.

3.4 Information pack to be provided

At this stage you will be provided with thorough information on how homecare will work for you. This will include information on your homecare provider.

Every homecare patient can expect to receive this information.

3.5 Provision of the right contact details for different issues

You will also be given contact details for your homecare provider, should you need to get in touch with them at any stage. You will also have details of who to contact in your clinical team, at the hospital or clinic.

3.6 Setting up the service

In order for you to receive the best service possible you may need to make very slight changes to your set up at home. This will depend on your treatment needs, and you can expect to be guided on this by your homecare provider when they first contact you.

4.7 Initiation document

Every patient will also be required to sign an initiation document. This indicates you have been happy with all of the information you have received and would like to start benefiting from homecare.

4.0 First contact with homecare company

At this stage you will hear from your new homecare provider's customer service team.

4.1 The role of customer service

When your homecare provider contacts you they will provide you with all the information you need on how their service will work for you.

Every patient is entitled to ask as many questions as necessary and the provider will answer as best they can.

5.0 Deliveries

This section of the charter will explain to you what you can expect when your medicines are delivered to you.

5.1 The standards expected

Where the homecare team delivers your medication every patient can expect to receive a discrete service and to be treated with respect and dignity, for example, vans making deliveries will not have information on them that will indicate you are receiving homecare.

Each member of the homecare team who delivers your medicines will be fully CRB checked – this is the ‘criminal records bureau’ check and it helps ensure the staff caring for you do not have any criminal convictions.

Deliveries may also be made by couriers or postal services arranged by homecare providers.

5.2 The different methods ie home or pharmacy or appointed place

You may be able to arrange your medicines to be delivered to another address other than your home, for example your workplace or to a local pharmacy. If appropriate, this option will be offered to you by your homecare provider.

5.3 Access to home

In some instances a member of your homecare team may need to enter your home in order for them to help you as much as possible.

Every patient can expect an explanation on why this is necessary and has the right to refuse entry to the team member.

It is important you understand that the homecare team will only enter your home to help you. If you refuse them entry you could be left without the care you need.

Homecare staff will carry an identity badge to show who they are, you can expect to be shown this before letting them enter your home.

5.4 Responsibility for medicines held at home

If you find that you are receiving more deliveries than you need, or perhaps not enough, it is your responsibility to flag this to your homecare provider, usually by phoning the customer service team. If you have stock left when a new delivery arrives you should check the older stock is still in date and use it before starting the new delivery – unless there have been changes in what you should take.

Some medicines require special storage, such as in a fridge, your homecare company will explain this to you and also explain your responsibilities, this may include checking the fridge is at the right temperature and reporting any problems.

5.5 Responsibility to be available

The homecare provider will discuss with every patient when they can expect their medicines to be delivered.

After this has happened, it is your responsibility to make sure you are at home and available to receive your medicine at the arranged date and time.

Make sure you contact the homecare provider customer service team if something unexpected arises and you cannot be there to accept your medicines.

5.6 Issues re age of person receiving – designated person

All patients will receive a discrete and sensitive service, and for this reason only designated people may sign for your medicines.

Where possible, it is preferred that you sign for your own medicines. Your homecare provider will appreciate that this may not always be possible, which is why it is important for you to designate someone to be able to sign for your medicines on your behalf. The designated person should be an adult wherever possible.

6.0 Nursing services

For some, it may be necessary for a nurse to visit you at your home to administer your medicines or provide related care.

Any patient who is also visited by a nurse can expect them to a fully qualified and registered professional. It is your responsibility to accommodate them in order to help them to complete their job properly.

7.0 Complaints

If you feel you need to complain about any aspect of your homecare you should contact your homecare provider to begin with. The details of who to contact should be in your information pack. You can also contact the hospital or your clinical team.

Homecare companies have a responsibility to pass on any concerns you have to your clinical team.

Every patient has the right to comment on the service they receive.

8.0 If things go wrong

Homecare medicines services are of a high standard but errors can occur. Any patient who believes an error has been made regarding their homecare has the right to voice their concerns. When you start on homecare you will be given information about what to do if this happens.

If you would like to talk to someone you should contact your homecare provider. You may also need to contact your clinical team if you are concerned about what to do.

The homecare company and the NHS will want to learn from any errors so reporting them is important.

9.0 Taking your medicines regularly

Once you have started taking your medicines it is important you follow the instructions given and take them regularly. Doing this will mean you will get the expected benefits and avoid waste. If you find you have problems or concerns about your medicines you should talk to your clinical team.

If for any reason a member of your homecare team has any concerns about your treatment they have a responsibility to share this with your clinical team. This would only be to ensure you are benefiting from the best treatment possible.

11.0 Patient education

Every patient can expect to receive thorough information about how homecare works, as well as their homecare provider and the medicines you are taking. This will include advice on how to take your medicine safely.

This will provide you with all of the information you need and something to refer to if you ever have any questions.

All patients are welcome to contact their homecare provider at any point if they have any queries.

12.0 Feedback – the survey & questionnaire & responsibility to contribute

Every patient will, at some stage, be asked for feedback on their homecare experience. This will usually be at least once each year.

This will be an opportunity for you to voice your thoughts on the service you receive and will give your provider the information they need to make their service as good as possible. It is expected that you will help by providing feedback if you can.

What you say in this feedback will help the homecare company, the hospital and the manufacturer better shape the service for what you need.