

Pharmacy update

The HOSP have posed a number of queries about our pharmacy service and these are answered below:

- Is there any possibility that prescriptions could be prepared the day before patients' planned discharge?

Doctors are encouraged to write discharge prescriptions 24 hours in advance of a patient's discharge. However, due to the rapid turnover of patients in the hospital this is not always achievable and often medication needs do continue to change, even on the day of discharge itself. Therefore, amendments to pre-planned prescriptions are often required.

Our Pharmacy Service has set up ward based dispensing stations to assist the timely turnaround of discharge prescriptions. The Trust's target for turnaround of discharge prescriptions is 80% in 90 minutes. We exceed this with 86% of prescriptions being dispensed under 90 minutes, and our ward based dispensing achieves a turnaround time of under 40 minutes in the majority of cases. We are also increasingly dispensing medication ready labelled for discharge to further increase efficiency.

Gosport War Memorial Hospital is different to Queen Alexandra Hospital as it has no on site Pharmacy. Therefore prescriptions ready for discharge have to be sent to another hospital site to be dispensed, and are then returned on the following days transport run.

Planning ahead is essential to getting the required medications on time to prevent delays to discharge.

- Prescriptions from outpatient consultations - apparently the prescriptions can only be taken to the hospital pharmacy. Would it be possible to allow prescriptions to be taken to any pharmacy in the city to give the patients the choice?

Prescriptions written for hospital outpatients can only be dispensed by our hospital pharmacy service. Hospital prescriptions are not valid in community pharmacies as the pharmacy will not be reimbursed for the cost of the medicines, their contract within the NHS is to dispense medication on the official prescription forms issued by the government, their FP(10) prescription form.

The Hospital can in certain circumstances issue FP(10) prescriptions which can be dispensed in any community pharmacy but this is usually only when there is no access to the local Hospital dispensary, this may occur for example in clinics operated in Gosport War Memorial Hospital. This is generally a more expensive option for the NHS. The hospital is able to benefit from economies of scale and we are therefore able to purchase medicines at significantly cheaper rates.

- At an appointment at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital, Cllr Eddis' consultant told him that he was unable to give him a prescription. Cllr Eddis had to wait for a letter to be sent to his GP, then make an appointment to see them to get the prescription. This was discussed at an informal meeting a while back and I think Peter Mellor said that consultants can write prescriptions. Could you confirm that all consultants know that they can do so please?

Briefing Sheet

When a patient is seen in our Outpatients the Consultant may decide that a change to the patient's regular medication is required, or that a new medication should be added but may also feel that this change is not urgent. The Consultant will then write to the patients GP suggesting the change in medication that he feels is appropriate. This gives the GP the choice to accept the advice or to make a different choice of drug from the same therapeutic class that they may have had more experience with prescribing.

The Trust operates a limited Formulary of medicines which is a controlled list of drugs which are agreed as having sufficient clinical evidence of efficacy and value for money. If a Consultant would like to prescribe something that has not yet been approved for the local Formulary he may ask the GP to prescribe this drug in advance of it being available within the Trust. GPs are not bound to accept such requests and they do report back to our formulary group for information.

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