

Prescription Ordering Service Direct (POD) FAQs



**With you.
For you.**



What is a POD?

The prescription ordering direct (POD) service is located within your local community. We are a team of skilled health professionals working across West Lancashire processing prescriptions and providing advice and support to patients and health professionals enabling better outcomes and improving patient safety through appropriate medicines use through the utilisation of appropriate technology whilst delivering cost effective prescribing.

There is currently a prescribing POD based in Sandy Lane serving the patients from Skelmersdale Family Practice which will be extended to Manor Primary care in March 2018. A further POD will be opened in Burscough in Spring 2018 initially for Stanley Court, Tarleton and Lathom House surgeries with further expansions planned for both throughout the year.

What is changing?

The POD, which was originally trialled in 2017 as a pilot in Skelmersdale, is a prescribing hub based within GP practices, with local healthcare professionals, who are qualified to deal with prescriptions and offer medications advice.

This dedicated team are on hand to help patients deal with any prescription queries that they may have, be it advice on repeat prescriptions, medicines reviews or general medicines queries.

The POD is a further tool to help patients in West Lancashire to manage their medicines use and ultimately help the NHS in West Lancashire to reduce wasted medicines.

Will the way I order my prescriptions change?

All repeat prescriptions will be processed by the local POD. However, you can choose which ordering system suits you. If you'd rather not make a direct phone call to your local POD, you can order via Patient Access or by handing your own repeat prescription slip into your local GP practice or local POD.

Will my personal information be safe?

The POD team will have access to your medical records, so they can process your prescription request. They will ONLY access your personal information that is relevant to your request. Your personal information is secure and confidential, in line with the Data Protection Act of 1998.

Will I have to travel to my neighbourhoods POD to collect my prescription?

No. Prescriptions can be ordered in the format that suits your needs best, either via telephone, online or through prescription slips. Prescription requests will be processed by the local POD and authorised by your GP before being sent to the pharmacy of your choice. You can continue to collect your prescriptions from the pharmacy of your choice, however, if you have an existing agreement with your pharmacy to deliver your prescription, please speak to them to ensure this will continue.

Will I be able to contact someone in the case of confusion or emergency?

Yes, you can contact a member of the POD team on 01695 588 522 (Skelmersdale POD), Monday to Friday, from 9am until 5.30pm – There will be a different number for the Burscough POD, which we will advertise shortly.

If you require any advice out of these times, please call freephone NHS 111. NHS 111 is open 24/7 365 days a year.

How will the service benefit me?

Ordering your repeat prescription will be quick and simple, either through Patient Access (<https://patient.emisaccess.co.uk>) or evergreen life, a prescription slip or a phone call. The POD is run by experts who can answer any queries. The team can discuss your medication requirements and can review these if needed. We believe this offers a new, safer and more efficient service for our local patients.

What impact will the service have on my GP practice?

Wasted medicines cost the NHS in West Lancashire £600,000 per year, money which could be put to better use to improve health and care in your local community. Additionally, the POD will reduce pressures on our increasingly busy GP practices, which will allow GPs to spend more time with patients who need it the most.

How will the introduction of the POD save money for the NHS?

The introduction of the POD is a further tool to help patients in West Lancashire to manage their medicines use. By utilising the POD team, who will be able to assist in managing any medicines-based queries and offer any support that patients may need. This will in turn help to minimise the amount of wasted medicines being prescribed in West Lancashire, which cost the NHS in West Lancashire approximately £600,000 per year.

In addition, by having a team dedicated to responding to medicines queries, this will free up our GPs to assist patients with more complex needs.

What will happen to our current prescription clerks?

Medicines coordinators within GP practices will be given extra training and work as part of a team in the central clinical hub where the POD is based. This means staff will have the opportunity to improve their skills and progress in their job roles.

Will the service change the time scale for receiving prescriptions?

Once your prescription request has been received by the POD, it will be reviewed by one of our health professionals, authorised by the GP and sent to the pharmacy within two working days. Please allow time for the pharmacy to get your prescription ready.

What about those who are vulnerable and cannot order their own prescriptions?

Vulnerable patients will be contacted by one of our trained professionals in the POD on a regular basis to ensure their medications are correct, ordered and received on time. Alternatively, a family member can be given permission by the patient to order and collect their prescriptions, in this case the designated family member could order through the POD in their chosen form.

What will happen if my GPs prescriptions clerk is off sick or on holiday?

The POD brings together health professionals from local GP practices, to work as a team, to deliver a safe, efficient and quality prescriptions service. This means the prescriptions service is not managed by one individual but a multiskilled team. Therefore, prescription services will not be halted by staff sickness or holidays, as there will be a fully qualified team to cover demand.