

Online ordering of repeat prescriptions by a care home: Information for staff

Why online GP services are a good thing

Using online health services has become more and more popular over the last few years. The computer systems in GP surgeries make it easy for patients to order repeat prescriptions and book or cancel appointments quickly, at any time of the day or night. This is more convenient for patients, it reduces the need to travel to the GP surgery, and it saves the practice lots of time. GPs get fewer phone calls and pieces of paper to act on. This means they can more, do things faster, and generally help make things better for patients.

Moving from paper to online ordering of repeat prescriptions

Care home staff can be set up by a resident's GP practice as a 'proxy' to order repeat prescriptions online, instead of on paper.

Anyone with proxy access must go into the part of the GP clinical record that deals with repeat medication. It is important to make sure the resident understands and is comfortable with this.

Residents must be given information about the new way of ordering prescriptions and have the chance to ask questions or talk through concerns before agreeing to the change.

The GP record is personal to each resident/patient. Residents must be told about the new way of working and be given a chance to talk about any concerns or ask questions with a member of staff.

Residents can decide they do not want care home staff to have proxy access. They can also ask their GP to remove proxy access at any time.

Your manager has agreed with your local GP practice and pharmacy to use proxy access and work together in the best interests of your residents.

What you will need to do

You will need to sign a form to say that:

- your information governance training is up to date
- you agree to keep personal information safe, secure, and confidential
- you agree to take responsibility and accountability for the information you see and use on behalf of your residents

Your signed form is sent to the GP practice which will set up proxy access for you and other staff. You will be sent login information by the practice and told how to activate your account. This must be done before you can order any medication for your residents.

Is it secure?

The care home has an agreement with the GP that means you must keep any information you see in a resident's GP record confidential and secure. You also need to keep your information governance training up to date.

GP computer systems also have built in security and keep track of everyone who opens the record, what they do, and when. There are procedures in place to handle anything or anyone who breaches security or confidentiality via a robust, electronic, audit trail.

Can residents object?

Yes. The information in the GP record belongs to your resident and they can decide who can access it. Each resident decides if they want you to have access or not. Residents can object at any time and their wishes must be respected. Access by the care home staff can be removed at any time by your GP practice.