

CPCS Newsletter

September 2023

Welcome to the September edition of the CPCS Newsletter. This newsletter is distributed to all pharmacies and practices in Humber & North Yorkshire and aims to support the delivery of this service.

Communication is key!

Feedback from high activity practices (practices sending more than 20 referrals per month) say communication is key to the success of the service. Practices gave detail that;

- Reception staff expertly introduce the concept of CPCS to the patient, explaining how the process will work and managing their expectations of timescale.
- Pharmacy teams act on referrals in a timely manner by either contacting the patient or patient contacting the pharmacy.
- Completed consultation summaries are detailed and returned to the surgery in a timely manner.
- Where escalation is necessary the pharmacist contacts the surgery, giving sufficient detail for the practice to action requests without a further consultation with the patient.
- Where escalation is required, the pharmacist communicates the intended outcome to the patient, giving a realistic timeframe.
- Practices and pharmacies meet regularly to review conditions lists and adapt local processes to reflect the current needs of patients and maximise service delivery.

Applying this to your practice - Points to consider

- Does the practice have a dedicated phoneline or email address they could share with pharmacies to speed up the escalation process.
- Where there is no dedicated phoneline would the practice and pharmacies benefit from communicating via NHS mail (for non-urgent queries) rather than tying up public phone lines.
- Does the practice have the contact details of the local pharmacies in case of queries.
- In cases where patients are presenting at the reception desk after a consultation would it benefit the practice if patients presented with a printed summary of the outcome of their consultation?
- Would reception staff benefit from some suggested scripts/phrases to use when speaking to patients about CPCS.

Including the whole team in the delivery of CPCS

Below are some useful hints and tips to maximise service delivery in your Pharmacy.

Ensure all staff know what CPCS is so they can help to identify referred patients.

Patients will not always inform a member of the pharmacy team that they have been referred by NHS 111 or a GP practice which can lead to referrals being missed and patients not receiving a consultation with a pharmacist. We suggest ALL Pharmacy team members are briefed on the service and ask patients seeking advice on the management of a minor illness (as opposed to those just asking to buy a specific OTC medicine) whether they have been referred by their GP surgery: "Can I just check whether you have been referred to us by someone at your GP surgery today".

Ensure all staff know how to access referrals.

We suggest ALL pharmacy staff are trained on how to access referrals to ensure referrals do not get missed during busy periods, or when locums are acting as the responsible pharmacist. Staff members could be asked to access referrals, print off the record and place into the pharmacy's workflow to ensure they are completed in a timely manner. Alerts or reminders could be set at intervals throughout the day to remind staff to check for referrals.

Ensure all staff have access to NHS mail.

Under the NHS Terms of Service, contractors must ensure there are sufficient staff with linked personal NHS mail accounts to ensure that the shared mailbox can always be accessed when the pharmacy is open, including when locums are acting as the responsible pharmacist. Information on how to link additional NHS mail accounts to a pharmacy shared mailbox can be found [here](#).

Ensure all staff know what to do if the pharmacy is not able to provide the service on a specific day.

We suggest ALL pharmacy team members, including locums and relief pharmacists, are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of a temporary suspension of the service and have easy access to the key contact numbers for the service (they should be recorded in the SOP for the service).

If your pharmacy would like any support to implement any of the above suggestions or to discuss other ways in which you can maximise service delivery, please contact: f.pedlingham@nhs.net