

Unnecessary and over ordering of medication.

March 2020



We are aware that in some areas patients have been trying to order excessive quantities of medication or ordering medication in anticipation of their clinical condition deteriorating. This is particularly the case for respiratory medication.

This is starting to impact on the supply chain with reports of shortages of salbutamol inhalers.

We have been working with the communication and engagement team to get messages to patients to prevent over ordering, stockpiling or ordering medication that is not routinely required.

We would suggest that practices **do not** issue prescriptions for historic medications that are not on routine/variable repeat or have not been issued within the last 3-6 months without a discussion with the patient to understand if it is still clinically indicated.

Specifically:-

- COPD rescue packs should not be issued without a clinical review.
- Requests for salbutamol inhalers should only be issued to patients who have a relevant and current respiratory diagnosis.
- Steroid inhalers should only be prescribed in line with the local respiratory guidance.
- Usual quantities of medication should be issued.
- Stable patients should be reassured that they do not need to order medication 'just in case' as medication will be made available if/when clinically appropriate.