

Potential Exemptions from Patient-Led Ordering of Medicines

Certain patient groups should be considered for exemption from patient-led ordering of medicines to ensure patient safety, continuity of care, and appropriate medication management. GP practices and pharmacies should work together to identify and support these patients.

Patients Receiving Monitored Dosage Systems (MDS)

This is an interim measure to allow a review of MDS patients.

At this time all patients using MDS require pharmacy-led ordering to ensure sufficient preparation time and to prevent delays and medication errors. Pharmacies must conduct an equality assessment (if this has not already been completed) to confirm that MDS is necessary based on clinical need rather than convenience. Alternative options, such as MAR charts, may be equally effective for some patients.

During this review period, patients assessed as not requiring MDS should be supported to receive medicines in original packs with appropriate adjustments.

Supporting information is available here:

<https://greatermanchester.communitypharmacy.org.uk/mds-and-assisted-medicines-guidance/>

Other Patient Groups Potentially Requiring Alternative Ordering Methods

Some patients may need alternative support for ordering medications, particularly if they do not have family or carer assistance. These include:

- **Vulnerable Patients:** Those with learning disabilities, severe mental health conditions, dementia, or cognitive impairments who may struggle with digital ordering systems
- **Patients with Physical Disabilities:** Individuals with conditions such as severe arthritis or neurological disorders that impact dexterity and digital access
- **Patients with Digital or Language Barriers:** Those with low digital literacy, lack of internet access, or language barriers preventing effective use of online systems
- **Patients at Risk of Medication Misuse:** Individuals with substance misuse issues or erratic lifestyles who require closer monitoring of prescriptions

All patients should be assessed individually to determine the most suitable ordering method. Where exemptions apply, clear communication between GP practices and pharmacies is essential to ensure continuity of care. Contingency plans should also be in place for safeguarding concerns or unexpected changes in patient circumstances.

Please note: some patients in the above groups may still wish to manage their own prescription ordering and should be supported to do so where possible.