

Freedom of Information Request	FOI 22-392	2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2022
--------------------------------	------------	--------------------------------

- Please can you provide me with the legislation which enabled the so called agreed changes between ABUHB, Chepstow GP practices and the prescription providers (following receipt of the Help Your Pharmacy Help You – Order your Repeat Prescriptions Ahead of the Bank Holiday Weekend email**

***Some of the work traditionally done by GPs is now done by pharmacists instead. This includes giving prescription-only medication for a number of minor ailments without the need to see a doctor***

This is associated with the introduction of the Common Ailments Scheme launched in Wales in 2013. The communication is designed to encourage patients with the common ailments detailed to attend a pharmacist rather than a GP so that appointments can be released in GP practices and improve access for patients. The ability to supply Prescription Only Medicines (POM) is enabled by the presence of Patient Group Directions (PGD), these documents are signed off by the Health Boards Medical Director, the Clinical Director of Pharmacy, Chief Executive Officer and the Pharmacist providing the service. A Patient Group Direction is defined in law (Regulation 213 of the Human Medicines Regulations 2012) as:

A written direction that relates to the sale or supply and to the administration of a description or class of medicinal product and that is signed by a doctor or dentist and by a pharmacist, and by any other person who may be required to sign it in the circumstances specified for its use, and which relates to sale or supply and to administration to persons generally (subject to any exclusions that may be specified in the PGD).

A Patient Group Direction provides a legal framework to allow the supply and/or administration of a specified medicine(s), by named, authorised, registered health professionals, to a pre-defined group of patients needing prophylaxis or treatment for a condition described in the PGD, without the need for a prescription.

The Common Ailments Scheme in Wales utilises PGD's to enable the supply of medicines (including POMS) to patients in order to treat conditions specified in the scheme. The PGD's are designed nationally then adopted and signed off at Health Board Level.

***If you're running low on your prescription now is the time to order so you don't fall short on the Bank Holiday weekend!***

This advice stems from the need to relieve pressure on pharmacies and GMS practices with regard to the supply of medication. It is based on [NHS Wales](#) communications advising patients to plan ahead especially at bank holidays

(see attached flyer) and [Simple steps to help your pharmacy help you \(Welsh Government press Release 19/03/2020\)](#). This was to help pharmacies with staff shortages associated with COVID-19 to manage their workflow. The advice remains relevant as pharmacies and GMS practices are still experiencing staff shortages. Patients are asked to plan ahead where possible as pharmacies continue to work hard to provide prescriptions. The advice to 'try and order your next prescription seven days before it is due' will help the pharmacist deal with urgent requests and queries and ensure prescriptions are ready on time.

**2. Please can you provide me with a list of prescription-only medication for the number of minor ailments without the need of seeing a doctor.**

Please find attached a copy of the All Wales Common Ailments formulary.

**3. Please can you provide me with the public consultation notes and emails regarding these contractual changes.**

The Health Board can advise that there was a manifesto commitment to establish community pharmacy as the first port of call for common ailments, this was embedded as a Programme for Government commitment in 2011. In March 2013, Welsh Government announced its intention to launch a national common ailments service for Wales. [The scheme was launched Nationally throughout Wales as a result of a positive evaluation of a pilot in 2015.](#)