

Proposal for Bulk Prescriptions for Nursing Homes



GIG
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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Aneurin Bevan
University Health Board

This proposal aims to show that a Bulk Prescription service is both cost effective and increases resident safety within the Care Home setting.

What is Bulk Prescribing?

A bulk prescription is an order for two or more patients bearing the name of an institution in which at least 20 persons normally reside, 10 or more of whom are registered with a particular GP practice. The prescription itself must be for medication classed either as P or GSL, it cannot be used for POM's.

Bulk prescriptions are not a new idea; they are used in other Health Boards in Wales as well as the rest of the UK. This is because it has been recognised that they could save money and provide a safer means of supplying medication to a home. To help illustrate this, Laxido will be used as an example but could easily be substituted for any other eligible medication.

1. Potential to reduce waste saving money for the NHS

a. Waste within homes comes from 3 main sources

i. Over ordering by care home staff

When ordering Laxido one twice daily (2 boxes of 30) for the next cycle

Number of Residents	Qty Required for 1 month	Carried over from previous month	Ordered	Amount in Stock
1	60	10	60 (2 boxes)	70
10	600	100	600 (20 boxes)	700
Bulk Prescription				
10 (BB)	600	100	500 (17 boxes)	600

The illustration above is an example but not uncommon. Waste comes from the current system requiring each resident having their own named medication. Medication is rounded up to the nearest full box so the resident has enough medication for the full month at the full prescribed dose. Bulk prescriptions effectively gather all the odds into complete boxes so reducing the number of boxes needing to be replaced

ii. Overprescribing by the GP practice

Sometimes when the prescriptions come from a home, the volume of prescriptions can be difficult for the surgery staff to manage. If some of the 10 residents did not require Laxido that month it can, and does happen, that it still appears on the prescription. With Bulk prescriptions all the Laxido would be on one script so the surgery staff would have only one laxido script to process.

iii. Unused medication because the treatment has stopped or the resident has died

When medication is stopped for any reason it must be disposed of as it can only be used for that resident. With the Bulk prescription service it can be retained by the home to be used by other residents and so reduce the amount required for the next supply cycle. If a resident stops their Laxido and normally has 2 boxes the order for the next month can be reduced by 2 (as it would normally) but any unused Laxido will go to reducing the amount needed for the next cycle and not disposed of as currently happens.

2. Reduction of space required in the drug trolley

If a home has 10 residents on Laxido, they would be required to have 10 boxes available during the drug round. This leads to clutter on and in the drugs trolley and considerably reduces the space available on the trolley where the nurse administers medication. With a bulk prescription the nurse need only take one box around on the drug round, thus leading to points 3 and 4 below

3. Reduces drug round time / dispensing time

Less handling of medication boxes

4. Reduces potential for administration error

Reduces clutter and gives more time and space to administer medication improving accuracy of administration.

It could also be time saving when treating an outbreak, for example, the provision of rehydration sachets. The prescription does not need the individual name of the person, just the name of the home.

Anticipatory Bulk Prescriptions

The above scheme is for P and GSL medication that has been prescribed for individual residents by their GP but supplied to the home as a single item under the name of the home.

Anticipatory medication is supplied using the same mechanism but where the medication has already been prescribed by their GP, the anticipatory medication, as evident by its name, is kept in the home in case of a sudden, urgent need for the medication.

Examples

Adrenaline 1;1000

If a resident has an unpredicted anaphylactic reaction it is vital to have adrenaline to hand but at most homes are having difficulty obtaining supplies of adrenaline. With anticipatory bulk prescriptions, the home can keep, for example, 2 ampoules and replace as and when one is used. the bulk prescription order would state the conditions under which it could be administered which the GP would be have agreed to and signed off on.

The use of adrenaline in the home would require that any nurse administering to undertake an annual refresher course

Inadine dressing

The anticipatory scheme would allow immediate treatment of skin tear without the delay of the GP writing a prescription and the pharmacy dispensing and delivering the dressing.

The ability to use dressings for more than one person would make a significant reduction in waste with both cost savings and space freed up within the medication rooms.