

Third Party repeat prescription ordering clarifications

Internet pharmacies

Internet pharmacies cannot bypass the local recommendation relating to “Third Party” ordering of repeat prescriptions, despite their adverts and leaflets suggesting otherwise. This would not prevent pharmacies ordering on behalf of patients who require assistance as per the original CCG guidance.

Please notify the medicines management team of any ongoing requests from internet pharmacies medicinesmanagement@calderdaleccg.nhs.uk

Echo App

It has come to light that some patients in the Calderdale area are ordering repeat prescriptions via an app called the Echo App. Concerns have been raised at the SWYAPC Medicines Safety Group regarding the safety and governance of Echo App*. The group currently have limited information on the company or its nature, only that Echo requests medication from GP via a fax on a patient's behalf, and the medications are then dispensed by two of their pharmacy partners in London <https://support.echo.co.uk/about-echo/who-are-echos-pharmacy-partners-and-where-are-they-based>

*Safety concerns include the fact that patients can order anything via the app – examples mentioned at the SWYAPC meeting included a patient ordering the wrong strength of warfarin in error, which caused significant additional workload in the practice to follow up and check the request. There were also concerns raised about the fact that the patient has not got any choice around which pharmacy they use as they have to use the allocated Echo pharmacy partner.

The CCG is recommending that community pharmacies should not pass along patient initiated requests by dropping their repeat slip at the surgery (even if it is in a sealed envelope) – and do not view the Echo approach of passing along patient initiated requests by fax as any different.

Patients should be encouraged to use the SystmOnline / Patient Access App or to use the practice website as these are integrated with the clinical systems. This allows patients to order their authorised repeat prescriptions and practices are familiar with the operation of these systems.