



Good practice in prescription collection

Prescriptions:

A lot of community groups/ mutual aid groups and volunteers are being asked to collect and deliver prescriptions for people self-isolating as a result of Covid-19. This is a really important service for people but it is also potentially a very risky one. With this in mind, the following good practice guide is intended to provide a framework to operate as safely as possible – please bear in mind that we are all operating in a rapidly changing environment and Government guidance may change. Please check <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> for more information

Please be aware:

Some of the prescriptions that volunteers may end up collecting have a potentially high street value. This means that it's fairly likely people will want to steal them in order to sell them on. The danger of harm is fairly major if someone doesn't receive the medication they need. This is thus a high risk activity and should only be done if precautions are followed.

Some Pharmacies already have delivery services – where possible voluntary support should be offered direct to the Pharmacy for them to co-ordinate and oversee. The newly recruited NHS Volunteers can deliver prescriptions – a local Pharmacy would need to contact <https://www.goodsamapp.org/NHSreferral> to seek assistance.

Where this is not possible, or they are overwhelmed with requests it may be necessary for community volunteers to collect and deliver prescriptions. The following points should be considered when developing a volunteer led service:

Friends/neighbours and relatives

- Prescription collection arrangements should be made between people who know each other well
- Where possible encourage those requiring prescription collection to use family, friends and neighbours. Someone who is known to them is the best solution. If a neighbour has offered to help with shopping and prescription collection and is known to them - this is the ideal – however some people in isolation have said they don't want to 'trouble' a neighbour – it is important to emphasise that there are limited volunteer resources in the community and that it would be better to rely on someone they know – it is sometimes helpful to point out where a neighbour has offered to help – that this is a genuine offer and they want to be helpful and useful
- Any delivery should be delivered in a hygienic way having regard for current guidelines
- Someone who is known – doesn't need a DBS check – and doesn't require any organising support – a simple solution



Community organisation/ Volunteer support

If there is someone in the community who doesn't know anyone who can collect their prescription, it's best to help them to arrange for the pharmacy to deliver it to them. Pharmacies do provide these services though they will be overstretched.

As a community organisation you can help.

Firstly, find out what services are available in your area and share this information. When providing a collection and delivery service using volunteers consider the following:

- Do you have the administrative resources to coordinate the service?
- Do you have a central contact point?
- The collection and delivery service will be needed for at least 12 weeks
- Do you have your own existing volunteers? It is preferable to use volunteers who are known to you.
- Do your volunteers have a current DBS check? Ideally yes – however we are not in normal operational times. If the volunteer is known to you – preferably for some time – that is OK.
- If a volunteer has a DBS with another organisation you could accept that along with a personal reference.
- If not DBS – references will be needed -
- Check the current Government guidance on DBS checks
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines>
- It is important to communicate with the Pharmacy to make them aware that volunteers are collecting prescriptions and who the point of contact is should they have any concerns.
- Controlled Drugs – where possible the Pharmacy should deliver these prescriptions themselves – where they do not have the resources, only a DBS checked volunteer who is known to you should deliver.
- Non-Controlled drugs – preferably to be delivered by a DBS checked volunteer. If not possible a volunteer who is known to your organisation, or a new volunteer with the appropriate references
- Provide some form of ID for the volunteer
- The volunteer should follow COVID-19 social contact recommendations and ensure good hygiene

The above is provided as guidance only – you may have your own systems and process.