

July 2024

Dear Patient

Re: a change to the way your prescription is dispensed

We are writing to tell you about a change to the way you can get your prescriptions, why this has happened and who to approach for help and advice.

It follows a review of our patient dispensing list by NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (K&M ICB). This review was necessary to ensure we meet the requirements of *The National Health Service (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations* which set out which patients GPs can dispense to.

These are patients who live in a rural area and who are more than 1.6km (one mile) from a pharmacy. The distance is measured 'as the crow flies' and not based on a road journey.

Most patients in the country get their prescriptions dispensed at a local community pharmacy and do not have the choice of having this done at their GP practice.

Unfortunately, we have been told that we are not entitled to dispense prescriptions for you because you do not meet the eligibility criteria described above. Instead, you will need to visit your local pharmacy to get your prescribed medication.

Patients with serious difficulty in using a pharmacy because of distance or inadequate means of communication may apply to remain on their doctor's dispensing list but there are very strict conditions to be met in this regard. If you believe that the serious difficulty rule might apply to you please discuss your situation with a local pharmacy in the first instance as they may be able to help by, for example, collecting prescriptions from the surgery on your behalf and delivering the dispensed medicines to your home.

NHS K&M ICB has given us till the 31st August 2024, during which time you can still use the practice dispensary. After this time you will need to find a suitable alternative.

The addresses and details of community pharmacies and the services can be found on the NHS Choices website (www.nhs.uk) or by phoning NHS 111 (dial 111).

If you have any questions or concerns arising from this letter – or wish to apply under the serious difficulty rule if a local pharmacy is unable to help – please contact us.

Thank you for your cooperation with this matter.

Yours sincerely



Kim Clarkson
Practice Manager
Swanscombe & Bean Partnership