

Bulk prescribing example policy

Care home name:	
Signature of care home manager:	
Date policy authorised:	
Date of review:	

Bulk prescribing can be used by the care home, with the agreement of the prescriber, to administer certain medicines from stock held by the care home (as on hospital wards for example), negating the need to have individual medicines for each resident. However, it should be remembered that all other medicines are prescribed on a named patient basis and cannot be used for other residents

Implementation of bulk prescribing can:

- reduce space needed on the medicines trolley,
- improve medicine round times,
- reduce potential for administration errors, by reducing clutter,
- reduce waste by reducing the total amount of stock required.

Requirements for bulk prescribing:

- The care home must have at least 20 residents.
- Ten or more of those residents must be registered with the same GP practice and only these residents can be part of bulk prescribing.
- Two or more residents must be prescribed the same medicine by the same GP practice. If this drops to one resident, bulk prescribing is no longer suitable.
- The medicine is classified as either a pharmacy (P) or general sales list (GSL) medicine. Prescription only medicines (POM) cannot be supplied via a bulk prescription.

The medicine(s) required by the care home on a bulk prescription should be agreed with the GP and if required, confirmed by the community pharmacy that they meet the P or GSL classification.

A list of the residents covered by the bulk prescription must be included on the bulk prescribing order form. Only residents from the specific GP practice can be included on the list.

Considerations for bulk prescribing

- Discuss with the GP and supplying pharmacy to confirm that they would be happy to bulk prescribe and dispense.
- Agree with the GP and pharmacy, the medicines that are required to be prescribed via bulk prescription. Decide which residents are suitable for having some of their medicine via bulk prescription.
- Medicine prescribed on a bulk prescription from a specific GP practice can only be administered to residents registered with that GP practice.
- Ensure that all relevant staff, particularly those involved with ordering and administering medicine, are familiar with bulk prescribing.
- A resident's initial prescription for a medicine must be on a regular prescription; this identifies the clinical need for the medication and allows for the full directions to be clearly stated on the resident's MAR chart.

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- Residents already taking the medicine can be considered as having had the prescription already written. Subsequent supplies can be requested on the bulk prescribing order form with the directions 'as directed'.
- If a new resident is started on a medicine currently being bulk prescribed for other residents, the initial supply must be made for the individual resident via prescription, to ensure appropriate directions are included on the MAR chart. Subsequent supplies can be requested on the bulk prescribing order form.
- If the GP alters a dose of a medicine currently being bulk prescribed, a new prescription must be supplied to ensure appropriate directions are included on the MAR chart. Subsequent supplies can be requested on the bulk prescribing order form.
- Bulk prescribing is not to be used for any self-administered medication.
- Bulk prescribing is not to be used to obtain stock for use as a homely remedy.

Ordering

- When ordering medication on the bulk prescribing order form, the total amount required should be calculated and the amount still in stock taken away from that total to give the amount required for the next order, see example below. The amount remaining for liquid medicines can be estimated.
- Once complete, the bulk prescribing order form should be sent with the regular medication order to the GP practice via the usual method, and a copy saved in the care home.
- Order forms can be stored and completed electronically if the care home has the facility.
- If the prescriptions come directly to the care home from the GP practice, the bulk prescriptions should be checked against the bulk prescribing order form and any discrepancies rectified before sending the prescription to the supplying pharmacy.

Resident's name	Dose	Total quantity required per month
Resident A	10 ml twice daily / as required	560 ml
Resident B	10 ml twice daily / as required	560 ml
Resident C	10 ml once daily / as required	280 ml
Resident D	15 ml twice daily / as required	840 ml
Resident E	15 ml once daily / as required	420 ml
Total		2660 ml
Current stock		1240 ml
Estimated amount remaining		380 ml
Amount required		1880 ml
Amount to be ordered		2000 ml (4 x 500 ml) bottles)

Receiving bulk prescription medicine from the pharmacy

- Ensure the medicine has the name of the care home in place of a resident's name.
- Confirm that the total amount requested for each medicine has been received. Any discrepancies should be reported at once.
- Check that the directions state 'as directed' and the wording 'bulk prescription' is included.
- The medicine can be booked in as a bulk quantity and stored in a locked medicine room.

Administration

- Ensure that all remaining supplies of the resident's medicine are used up before starting the bulk supplies.
- The MAR chart will indicate if the resident's medicine is to be dispensed from bulk medicine stock.
- Administer the medicine as you would any other medicine, following the care home procedure.
- If more than one GP practice is using bulk prescriptions, ensure the medicine administered to the resident comes from the supply prescribed by their registered GP practice.

Bulk prescribing by more than one GP practice

If more than one GP practice wishes to utilise bulk prescribing, it is essential to distinguish between the medicines prescribed by different GP practices. Ask the GP practice and community pharmacy to include the name of the GP practice on the prescription and medicine labels, as per the example below.

<p>Bulk prescription</p> <p>3000 ml Lactulose To be given in accordance with GP directions on the MAR chart. GP practice name: Care home name: Date:</p>
