Information to patients about the outpatient prescription

If you have visited hospital for an outpatient appointment and you need a medicine urgently, you may be given a prescription to take to the hospital pharmacy to be dispensed. This prescription differs from the prescription form used by your GP and cannot be taken to any other pharmacy, including your local community pharmacy, as they will not be able to dispense it. **You must take it to the hospital pharmacy.**

Medication is only issued from the hospital outpatient pharmacy when:
- Prescribing is urgent, i.e. treatment must start before you can reasonably be expected to obtain a prescription from the GP.
- Specialist monitoring is required, e.g. Cancer treatment
- The drug is only available in hospital or is part of a clinical trial.

If you are seen out-of-hours and the hospital pharmacy is closed, you will need to make arrangements to collect your medicine from the hospital pharmacy the next day.

If the medicine is not needed urgently, the hospital will tick the ‘non urgent’ box on the outpatient prescription which you should take to your GP. Please be advised that it can take 2 working days for your GP to process requests for new medication and issue you a prescription for your medicine. Additionally, in some situations, your GP will need to ensure they have received all relevant information from the hospital to enable them to prescribe the new medicine for you. This information should reach your GP as soon as possible but no longer than 10 working days.

Information for GPs regarding supply of medication following a hospital outpatient visit

**The South East London Interface Prescribing Policy** clarifies the roles of GPs, Acute Hospital clinicians and Mental Health clinicians and aims to facilitate consistent prescribing across South East London.

**Out-patient**
Medication is only issued from the hospital outpatient pharmacy when:
- Prescribing is urgent, i.e. treatment must start before the patient can reasonably be expected to obtain a prescription from the GP.
- Specialist monitoring is required, e.g. oncology, unlicensed or a locally agreed pathway recommends initiation in secondary care.
- The drug is only available in hospital, the BNF recommends treatment is initiated by a hospital consultant or is part of a clinical trial.

If **immediate** treatment is required following an outpatient consultation, a minimum of 14 days of drugs and a minimum of 5 days of dressings should be supplied by the hospital, unless the full course of treatment requires a shorter supply. The patient will be issued with an out-patient prescription which should be taken to the hospital pharmacy. **This prescription cannot be dispensed in local community pharmacies**

If the patient **does not require an immediate supply**, the patient will be informed that their treatment is not urgent. The clinician must fill out all relevant sections of the Out-Patient Referral form and tick the ‘Non-Urgent’ box. Patients should be advised that it can take up to 2 working days for the practice to process requests for new medication and to issue an FP10. All relevant information from the hospital enabling the GP to prescribe, should reach the practice within 10 working days.