

Dear Patient,

After many years of accepting repeat prescriptions over the telephone, we have taken the decision to end this service from 14th February 2022.

We have not taken this decision lightly as we have always striven to provide as many different routes of access to our services as possible to meet patient preferences. This has also not been done in isolation and we have been in discussion with the Leatside Patient Group since summer 2020 to ensure we have engaged appropriately with our patient representatives.

How will I be able to order a repeat prescription?

From Monday 14th February patients will be able to order their repeat prescriptions in the following ways:

1. Online using the NHS App. For those who can use the NHS App (or web portal) this is our preference as this enables you to also book appointments, check your vaccination status, Covid Pass and check your medical records. Information on how to access the NHS App is at the bottom of this email.
2. Online through EMIS Patient Access. As with the NHS App you can order repeat prescriptions and book appointments. To register for this, you will need to pop into the surgery with ID and fill in a form
3. In person. Simply complete and drop in the right-hand side of your repeat slip into our post box at the front of the building at any time of day or night.
4. By post to Leatside Surgery, Babbage Road, Totnes, TQ9 5JA
5. Some pharmacies offer ordering services as well

Online ordering is the quickest way of having your prescription fulfilled as the request goes directly to your named GP without needing to be manually added in.

For those patients who are entirely housebound and who have no access to online services or someone who can drop in their prescription for them we will make allowances.

Why will I no longer be able to order my prescription by phone?

1. To reduce waiting times. Almost exactly 25% of the phone calls made to the surgery are to order repeat prescriptions. By asking our patients to order their prescriptions online or by paper this will free up health navigators to deal with patient queries and appointment bookings. We should see a significant improvement in waiting times outside of our pinch points (such as Monday morning). Paper prescriptions can be uploaded onto our clinical system outside of times the phones are on ensuring that this can be done without distraction.

2. Probably the most important reason for this decision is safety. Having a member of our reception team take the order verbally over the phone introduces the possibility of inconsistencies between what the patient says they have ordered and what has been requested by the medical receptionists. By using online services or a paper order it also introduces an audit trail which can be used to ensure the correct request is fulfilled and investigated in the rare instances in prescribing error.

3. We feel this is safe and will be effective. We are not making this decision in isolation; in fact, all our bordering practices have moved to this method of prescription order over the past few years and have seen reductions in prescribing errors and waiting times over the phone. At the same time, very few patients have reported that this move has caused issues for them outside of a change in familiarity in the process. In discussion with these surgeries, we have seen reported patient satisfaction rates increase with respect to prescription ordering.

Below are some comments from members of our Patient Group who currently order their repeat prescriptions online:

“Like many others, I was uncomfortable at the idea of ordering my repeat prescriptions on-line and dithered for months. But, eventually I registered, and I am very glad I did so. I can now reorder at my convenience, at any time of the day and on any day of the week. The process is quick and easy. The biggest advantage is that I do not have to wait for long minutes at the end of the phone-line, waiting for the queue ahead of me to work its way through. I would whole heartedly recommend making this move.”

“I have been using this excellent service for years, and have found it easy to work, much quicker and more convenient than calling the surgery.....and lots better than walking to Leatside on a wet winter’s day! This morning it took me less than 5 minutes at home to order my prescription online, and all I needed was an ID (which appears on my screen automatically) and a simple password which I remember because the system gives me a helpful hint. If you have ever ordered shopping online, this is easy!”

The below guidance from NHS England highlights these points amongst others as why it is preferable for patients to order prescriptions online if possible.

Patient Online - encouraging patients to order repeat prescriptions online

Why do it?

There are **many benefits** to patients ordering their own, and/or family members, repeat prescriptions online, particularly when the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) is also enabled. Practices with more patients registered for online services will:

receive **fewer telephone calls**, saving time



that can be spent on providing quicker, more responsive services to those patients who can not or do not wish to use online services.

reduce costs by **eliminating prescription waste**, encouraging



patients to avoid stock-piling and to only order the medications that they genuinely need.



have patients who become **more capable, self-sufficient** and less reliant on the practice staff to process their prescription orders.

Patients will also develop a greater understanding of their medications.

improve patient satisfaction by providing a **more convenient** and seamless way to order repeat prescriptions.



have fewer visitors to the practice, **reducing footfall and shortening queues** – giving those patients who do need to visit the practice a better and more efficient experience.

be providing a **safer service** for both themselves and their patients. Some requests for medication over the phone are not clear and can take considerable time and effort to clarify what is needed – online requests avoid potential confusion, transcription and medication issue errors.



We understand that this might not be popular with some patients, but we hope that you will understand that your safety is of paramount importance.

When requesting a repeat prescription, please make it quite clear which medicines you require. Leave details of your request in the surgery post box at the front of the building or post them to us.

Thank you as always for your support, kindness and understanding.

Martin Randall
General Manager

A Guide to Setting Up the NHS App – If you are NOT already using online access

The first step is to download the NHS App. The NHS App is available now on iOS (from the [App Store](#)) and Android (from [Google Play](#)) To use it you must be aged 13 and over and registered with a GP surgery in England. If you are aged 13 to 15 you will need to contact your GP surgery first and request access to online services.

The NHS App has been available for more than one year via mobile devices but very recently became available through a web browser such as Internet Explorer or Google Chrome. This means you can use the app's features on a desktop computer or laptop, but you must first register on a mobile device. The NHS App is supported anywhere you travel including outside the country, however, must be supported by a UK mobile phone number.

If your mobile supports fingerprint detection or facial recognition, you can use it to log in to the NHS App each time, instead of using a password and security code.

The sign on process is a little more complex than if you already have online services so there are two options shown here dependant on your preferences:

Video from U-Tube <https://youtu.be/6FFjGUW6s7E>

Written explanation follows:

1. Having downloaded the App, you will be asked to:
 - Give an email address
 - Choose a password
 - Accept the NHS Login terms and conditions
2. You will receive an email containing a link which you have to click on to confirm the email address used. You will then have confirmation you have an NHS Login.
3. Return to the App and enter the NHS Login email address and password. You will now be asked to provide a mobile phone and as a result you will get sent a text message with a six-digit security code. You will be prompted to enter this code and press continue.
4. Next step to confirm identity via photo ID and a short video.
5. You will have to take a photo on your mobile of one of the following accepted types of ID:
 - Passport
 - UK driving licence (full or provisional)
 - Full European driving licence
 - European national identity card
6. You will have to take a short video of you face as you say 4 randomly generated numbers
7. You must enter your date of birth
8. You will have to provide your NHS number if you know it or if not your name and postcode registered with your surgery.
9. If you have completed all these steps properly then you can expect to hear confirmation within a couple of hours to say the identity check is all OK.

Once these steps are completed you will be able to use your NHS login to access using your email address and password. You also have the option to login using biometric data, using fingerprint or facial recognition.
