

Security of prescription forms

Aide-mémoire for NHS England area teams

- Develop a prescription security awareness culture amongst area team staff, all prescribers and GP practice staff. Reports of lost, or potentially lost prescriptions require immediate action.
- Ensure that robust policies and procedures are in place to manage the security of prescription forms effectively.
- Designate a member of staff to accept overall responsibility for overseeing the whole process involved – from the ordering, receipt, storage and transfer of prescription forms to their overall security (including access to them)..
- Maintain an up-to-date list of prescribers and GP practices to account for those who have left, moved employment/ CCG area or been suspended from prescribing duties.
- Check orders received from prescribers and GP practices against current details and status before issuing prescription form stock.
- Check deliveries of prescription form stock from the secure printer/supplier whilst the delivery driver is present, to check order and amount are correct and packaging is sealed and unbroken.
- Report and investigate irregularities at delivery stage immediately with the secure printer/supplier.
- Transfer prescription form stock to secure storage immediately.
- Maintain clear and unambiguous records on prescription form stock received and distributed.
- Patients, temporary staff and visitors should never be left alone with prescription form stock or allowed into secure areas where forms are stored.
- For onward delivery within NHS England and to other organisations (e.g. to GP practices, nurse/pharmacist prescribers), prescription form stock should be sealed to prevent access whilst in transit.
- Onward deliveries should be by internal/approved courier and only handed over when signed for.
- In the event of a loss or theft of prescription form stock, local procedures should be followed and the Controlled Drugs Accountable Officer and the police should be notified as required. It should also be recorded on the organisation's incident reporting system. NHS Protect should also be notified at prescription@nhsprotect.gsi.gov.uk using the form at annex B of the Security of prescription forms guidance document.