

Updating you on our Merger: Prescriptions

Over the last few months we've made progress in a lot of areas:

- Dr Shoeb is now working full time and we're no longer reliant on locums
- Our new phone system has been installed
- Internal modifications to the building are almost complete and have given us an extra clinical room
- We've increased the number of nurse and phlebotomy appointments

Unfortunately we are struggling to make progress on prescriptions. We're very aware that at the moment things aren't working as they should. The service hasn't been good enough and we need to sort it out.

Why have things been going wrong?

Historically, the vast majority of administration work for prescriptions at Farnsfield has been done by doctors and reviews have been fairly ad hoc. This has taken up a huge amount of doctor time and was unsustainable. In January, when we merged the IT systems of Clipstone and Farnsfield, we increased levels of staffing so that prescriptions could be managed by dedicated, trained prescription clerks. They work alongside our doctors and nurses to prepare and issue prescriptions.

Rather than waiting for medication to run out, medication reviews need to be done proactively. We have a system in place for this now but during the last few months lots of medications have come up for review. This has created a lot of extra work to see if blood tests or other checks are needed before medication can be issued.

We've always said that prescriptions can take 48 hours to get ready from the point of ordering. In reality it's often been much quicker. The extra workload during this transition has made it very challenging to meet this target and it's been an adjustment for everyone to get used to allowing this length of time.

The new way of working has also been an adjustment for staff and there's been a steep learning curve. Mistakes have been made and we do apologise for the inconvenience and difficulties it's caused.

What are we doing about it?

- Everyone with a long term condition will now be receiving an invitation to an annual review before or around their birthday month. The review is done in a few stages and includes a comprehensive review of all medication.
- We are moving staff around so that we will have a prescription clerk working at Farnsfield each day. They will be on hand to support staff and deal with queries or problems directly.
- We are moving work on prescriptions away from the reception desk as much as possible. It is a difficult job to do whilst answering phones and greeting people. The job needs uninterrupted time and focus.
- We are logging all issues that do occur so we can investigate them thoroughly and understand exactly what's going wrong.

We hope these steps will begin to address the issues and we will see marked changes in coming months. We would really appreciate you helping us by ordering medication in good time and letting us know if you do have any problems so that we can investigate and address them.

Dr Porter, Dr Smith, Dr Jack, Dr Das, Dr Hirsh, Dr Grayston, Dr Bartholomeuz, Matt Doig (Practice Manager)