

Staged supply service information sheet

A staged supply service refers to the situation in which a pharmacist will dispense and supply medicines to the consumer in instalments (e.g. daily, every second day, weekly, fortnightly or as otherwise arranged). Staged supply services can be initiated by the prescriber, other healthcare professionals, the pharmacist or the consumer/agent and are likely to benefit people who:

- have difficulty remembering to take their medicines;
- are taking a medicine which may accidentally or deliberately be misused or over-used and cause harm;
- are taking a medicine where there is a risk of misuse, abuse or diversion; or
- are confused about when and how they should be taking their medicines.

Pharmacists will dispense the prescribed quantity of medicines and supply the required doses to the consumer/agent. The balance of the prescribed quantity will be stored securely in the pharmacy until the next supply is due. The pharmacy may have reminder options for when the next supply is due or when the prescribed quantity is running out. As part of the staged supply service, consumers/agents and pharmacists will be asked to sign an agreement outlining the terms of the service, including:

- how often medicines will be collected;
- what medicines will be supplied under the staged supply service and the quantity to be supplied;
- the procedure to be followed in the event of missed/lost doses;
- consent for the pharmacist to discuss matters relating to the consumer's care with the prescriber and/or other healthcare professionals;
- details of termination of the service;
- fees for the service; and
- a system for recording receipt of supply.

Record of supply

At each supply, the consumer and the pharmacist will be asked to sign a *Staged supply record* which will list the date, time and number of tablets supplied. In the event of any disputes over supply, this form will be used to confirm whether supply has occurred. The pharmacist may also record notes about payment arrangements, communication and prescription requests on the *Staged supply record*.

Third-party collection of doses

Medicines must be collected by the consumer unless prior arrangement has been made with the pharmacy. When such arrangements occur, the consumer should phone the pharmacy with the name and address of the person who will be collecting the dose. The consumer should provide the third party with a signed, written request, which the third party will present to the pharmacy when they collect the dose. The pharmacist must be able to confirm the identity of the third party.

Frequently asked questions

Consumer questions:

What happens if I go away on holidays?

You should give the pharmacy as much notice as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.

These arrangements could include contacting the doctor so that your medicine can be transferred to another pharmacy or you can be given additional supplies to last the holiday period.

What if I move away?

The pharmacy will make every effort to support you in making arrangements with a new doctor/pharmacy.

What if I can't get to the pharmacy?

You should contact the pharmacy as soon as possible to see whether alternative arrangements can be made.

What if the pharmacy is closed?

It is your responsibility to be aware of the opening hours of the pharmacy on the days you are due to collect your medicines.

What if I want to stop the service?

You should contact the pharmacy to let them know you want to stop the service so you can discuss the options with the pharmacist.

Why do I need to sign a form?

The form is an agreement between you and the pharmacist and outlines all the terms of the service so there is no confusion. You will be given a copy of the form to refer back to.

Prescriber questions:

How do I initiate the service?

Please notify the pharmacy in writing.

What information will the pharmacy need from me?

The pharmacy will need patient details, medicine details, dosing schedules and prescriptions.

In what circumstances will the patient be referred back to me?

The patient will be referred back to you if they regularly miss their doses, there are issues related to their safety, there is conflict, their circumstances change, or they require a new prescription.

Will I be notified if my patients are accessing this service?

Yes, unless otherwise agreed with the patient.

What happens if the patient fails to pick up their medicines?

The pharmacist may contact you.

What are the arrangements for organising new prescriptions?

It is the patient's responsibility to organise new prescriptions; the pharmacist will work with the patient to help them to remember when a new prescription is needed.

Can I arrange for a specific pharmacy to provide the service?

Yes, in consultation with the patient and the pharmacy.

What happens if I change the patient's medicine?

Please notify the pharmacy in writing of any changes as soon as possible.