

The NHS has implemented a 28-day prescription policy for patients being discharged from hospital. This policy aims to balance patient convenience, good medical practice, and minimal drug wastage. The policy is based on the following principles:

Patient Convenience:

Patients will receive enough of each medicine to last for 28 days, making it easier for them to manage their medication.

Medical Practice:

The prescription interval should be in line with the medically appropriate needs of the patient, considering factors like the stability of the condition, the duration of the medication, potential side effects, and any monitoring required.

Resource Management:

The policy helps safeguard NHS resources by reducing the amount of medicine wasted when it is stopped or changed by doctors.

Safety:

By reducing the number of containers of the same medicine, the risk of errors and potential poisoning is minimized, especially for elderly patients and young children.

Financial Impact:

The majority of patients collecting repeat prescriptions do not pay prescription charges, and if they do, a Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC) can save them money if they have more than 3 prescription items in 3 months or more than 11 prescription items in 12 months.

Patients should be aware that some medicines, such as inhalers, insulin vials, oral contraceptives, and hormone replacement therapy, may not be suitable for 28-day prescribing due to clinical or safety reasons. The prescriber will determine the appropriate interval based on the individual patient's needs.