

Medicines Optimisation Position Statement

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| Position Statement | Prescribers should not supply medicines for British Nationals going abroad for more than 3 Months |
| Position Statement number | 006 (2017) |
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In line with NHS policy, North East Hampshire and Farnham CCG recommends that prescribers should NOT supply treatment durations in excess of THREE MONTHS for patients who are going to live or travelling abroad or otherwise absent from the UK. Patients should make local arrangements in their country of residence for on-going medical care.

Under legislation, the NHS's duty of care regarding NHS services, including prescribing, ends where a patient has been absent, or intends to be away from the United Kingdom for a period of more than three months.¹ Patients who intend to be away from the United Kingdom for a period of at least three months or who have been absent from the United Kingdom for a period of more than three months should be removed from the practice's list.¹

The NHS accepts responsibility for supplying ongoing medication for temporary periods abroad of up to three months.² If a person is going to be abroad for over 3 months they are only entitled to an NHS prescription for a sufficient supply of regular medicines to get to the destination and find an alternative supply of that medication.² Patients should check on arrangements for obtaining prescribed medicines in the country they intend to go to before leaving the UK.³

The responsibility for prescribing, including the issue of repeat prescribing and the duration of prescriptions, rests with the doctor who has clinical responsibility for that particular aspect of a patient's care.

Patients should be advised they need to check the regulations on taking medicines out of the UK and into the country they intend to visit³ – further information is available on the NHS Choices website. <http://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx>

Note: Patients who return to the UK for the purpose of obtaining medication, or who use a local proxy to request prescriptions on their behalf should be refused supply. Patients should be directed to local services in their country of residence with the offer of supplying appropriate medical notes and a list of current medicines to their qualified medical practitioner.

References

1. http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/291/pdfs/ukxi_20040291_en.pdf (Date accessed 13/09/2017)
2. BMA General Practitioners Committee. Prescribing in General Practice 2015
<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/gp-practices/service-provision/prescribing/prescribing-and-dispensing>
3. <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/movingabroad/Pages/Introduction.aspx> (Date accessed 13/09/2017)

Acknowledgments

Pan Mersey Area Prescribing Committee Prescribing Policy Statement -
<http://www.panmerseyapc.nhs.uk/guidelines/documents/G4.pdf>