

## Community Pharmacy Palliative Care on call service

### Service specification

#### Background

Palliative care services are currently provided by the Community Pharmacy Palliative Care Network. Details of these pharmacies are available at:

[Palliative Care - Business Services Organisation \(BSO\) Website \(hscni.net\)](http://hscni.net)

The on-call service has established since the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 to ensure sufficient access palliative care medicines to meet patients' needs at times when pharmacies are closed.

#### Service aims

The aim of the service is to increase access to palliative care medicines by establishing an on-call rota for palliative care pharmacies.

#### Pharmacists eligible to provide the service

The service may be provided by community pharmacists in the Northern and Western Trust areas who are part of Community Pharmacy Palliative Care Network.

#### On Call Rota Hours

The hours of operation of the rota will be kept under review. The current rota arrangements are as follows:

Area	New Palliative care rota arrangements effective from 1st July 2024
Co. Antrim	Sunday rota 1-6pm (only if no commercial opening of a palliative care pharmacy in the area) A public holiday rota 1-6pm will be put in place on public holidays* if required
Mid-Ulster	Sunday rota 1-6pm A public holiday rota 1-6pm will be put in place on public holidays* if required
SE Antrim	Sunday rota 1-6pm (only if no commercial opening of a palliative care pharmacy in the area) A public holiday rota 1-6pm will be put in place on public holidays* if required
Derry	Sunday rota 1-6pm (only if no commercial opening of a palliative care pharmacy in the area) A public holiday rota 1-6pm will be put in place on public holidays* if Required

Omagh	Sunday rota 1-6pm (only if no commercial opening of a palliative care pharmacy in the area) A public holiday rota 1-6pm will be put in place on public holidays* if Required
Fermanagh	Sunday rota 9am -1pm A public holiday rota 1-6pm will be put in place on public holidays* if required

\*with the exception of Christmas Day where palliative care rota is not available

### Hours of Service

- On call pharmacists will be required to be contactable for the period indicated in the rota spread sheet provided. The on call pharmacist should not be called outside these hours.

### Contact details for on-call palliative care pharmacists

- Pharmacists contracted to be on-call will provide their mobile telephone number with the local Primary Care office.
- This information will be held securely and shared only with the OOH services, and pharmacists providing Sunday or bank holiday rota for the purposes of this service.
- If for any reason the pharmacist on call is unavailable or unable to offer the service it is their responsibility to arrange cover/swop with one of the other pharmacists in their section. The local Primary Care office must be informed of any change to the rota arrangement in advance.

### Medicines that may be supplied

- The on-call pharmacist will only be contacted for medicines required for palliative care as listed in the [Regional Palliative Care Medicines List](#).

### Oxygen

- Palliative care pharmacists should not be called to supply oxygen. Alternative arrangements will be in place to ensure provision of oxygen to patients being cared for by OOH services.

### Process

- If a medicine is required urgently, the prescriber, must in the first instance, consider using stock (or an appropriate alternative) held in the OOH centre before contacting the pharmacist on call.
- If a medicine is required urgently that is not available in the OOH centre, the prescriber must contact the pharmacist on call directly giving patient and prescription details. This will enable the prescriber and pharmacist to have a discussion about the medicine(s) including stock availability.
- Any prescriptions that require the pharmacist to be called out should be endorsed 'Urgent' by the prescriber.
- It will be the responsibility for the OOH centre to arrange

- Delivery of the prescription to the on-call pharmacy
- Collection of the dispensed medication from the on-call pharmacy

### **Security**

- The on-call pharmacist should follow the lone worker guidance provided by the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

### **Monitoring of service**

- The next working day the on-call pharmacist should complete the on-call rota monitoring claim via the electronic MS form.
- This will enable the pharmacists to claim payment and provide feedback on any call-outs received.

### **Payment**

Payment for the service will consist of two elements:

1. A standard hourly rate of £40/hour and a public holiday rate of £75/hour.

This will cover up until 10pm or time any callout completed if this is later than 10pm

2. Urgent fees will be payable on all prescriptions issued during the on-call period and endorsed as "urgent" by the prescriber. Fees for urgent prescriptions are £30 before 11pm and £50 after 11pm.

Please note that the Drug Tariff<sup>1</sup> allows for the following:

**"Where the prescription form has NOT been endorsed "Urgent" by the prescriber but where, in order to meet the urgent needs of the patient, the prescription has been dispensed urgently between 11.00pm and 8.30am, or on **Sundays and Public Holidays**, the urgent fee of £50.00 may be claimed provided that: -**

i. a. In the case of prescriptions dispensed between 11.00pm and midnight, the prescription was dispensed on the day it was written;

or b. In the case of prescriptions dispensed between midnight and 8.30am, the prescription was dispensed on the day or on the day following that on which it was written.

**ii. The prescription form is endorsed "Dispensed urgently at .....p.m./a.m. on .....(date)" by the pharmacist and is signed by the patient or his representative."**

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<sup>1</sup>[General Notes \(hscni.net\)](http://hscni.net)