

Important Safety Notice

Access to medication for end of life care from community pharmacies

From Dr Paul Gilluely Chief Medical Officer, NEL ICB
Actions To share with all members of team /organisation
Date: 14 September 2023

Dear colleagues,

We want to ensure that patients at the end of life are able to access the right end of life care (EoLC) medication when they need it. We have had a number of complaints from the families of patients who have struggled to access EoLC medication. This has caused significant distress for the patient family and friends at an already emotional time.

EoLC medications are only available from specific community pharmacies across NEL. These pharmacies have been commissioned to hold an agreed quantity of specific medicines, as requested by local palliative care specialists and our two local hospices. Some of these pharmacies also provide an out of hours (OOH) service.

[This is the list](#) of the commissioned pharmacies, contact details and stock that they hold. The information also includes how to access a community pharmacy out of hours.

Please could I request that you ensure that everyone working within your teams/organisation is aware of the list and process of requesting medication for EoLC. It is really important that any new starts or locums/interims are also made aware of this service. Please store this in a place where the information can be readily accessed by everyone.

We need to ensure that all patients do not experience any undue delays in obtaining their medication.

If you have any queries relating to this service please contact the Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation team on nelondonicb.prescribingqueries@nhs.net