

Primary Care MAR/MAAR Update – Information for Prescribers

Background

Recent changes in the provision of Medicines Authorisation Records (MARs) and Pan London Medicines Authorisation and Administration Records (MAARs) by GPs for patients requiring medicines administered by community nursing teams (e.g., those receiving palliative or end-of-life care (EoL)) have prompted this update. It is important to note the positions of East London Foundation NHS Trust (ELFT) and North East London Foundation NHS Trust (NELFT) regarding MARs/MAARs prompted this update.

GP Prescribing Responsibilities for medicines administered via MAR/MAAR

When GPs are no longer providing MARs or Pan London MAARs, it is essential that the legal prescription (FP10) sent to the community pharmacy contains all the required information. This enables community nursing teams to accurately transcribe details onto MAR/MAARs for safe medicines administration. Even if interim prepopulated charts are used for palliative and EoL medicines instead of Pan London MAARs, best practice remains to include all administration details on the FP10 prescription.

The FP10 prescription serves as the legal Patient Specific Direction (PSD) under the Human Medicines Regulations 2012. It authorises the supply of prescription only medicines (POM) by a registered pharmacy to a named patient, provided all legal requirements are met. It also acts as an instruction from the prescriber for medicines to be administered to a named patient after the prescriber has individually assessed the patient.

To ensure safe, timely and accurate administration of medicines, prescriptions (electronic or printed) must be written clearly and completely, to satisfy legal requirements for labelling prescribed medicines, including directions for use of the medicines and relevant precautions.

Key considerations for Prescribers:

- Always provide clear, complete instructions on every prescription.
- For a prescription to be complete (in accordance with British National Formulary Prescribing Requirements) state the:
 - Approved name of the medicine.
 - Dosage form (e.g. tablets, capsules, liquid).
 - Route of administration (e.g. oral, subcutaneous, intravenous).
 - Strength of medicine (e.g. 50mg, 250mg/5ml).
 - Dose and frequency to be taken/given
 - For “when required” (PRN) medication, it is important to specify dose, frequency and maximum daily dose.
 - For medications intended to be administered via syringe driver it is important to specify dose ranges, maximum doses for each medication and always prescribe the accompanying diluent (e.g. water for injection, or sodium chloride 0.9%). The infusion duration should always be specified.
 - Quantity prescribed or the number of days’ treatment to dispense.
- For controlled drugs, prescribers **must**:

- Comply with any specific restrictions (e.g. controlled drug prescribing requirements) where applicable.
- State the quantity prescribed in words and figures.

Prescribers should also be aware of additional prescription requirements for writing quantities and amounts as conveyed in the British National Formulary.

Additional Guidance

For palliative and EoL medicines, consult local hospice guidelines:

- St Joseph's Hospice Clinical Guidelines
- St Francis Hospice EoL Quick Reference Guide

It is good practice to include the reason for prescribing medication as part of the dosage instructions. If prescription details are incomplete and cannot be clarified using the Summary Care Record (SCR) or East London Patient Record, community nursing teams will contact the patient's registered GP practice to request the missing information. To prevent delays, please ensure that both the SCR and East London Patient Record are kept up to date with the latest dosing instructions. GP practices should ensure that EMIS or SystmOne records are kept up to date.

NHS England London regional team is working towards standardising prescribing instructions for commonly prescribed medications used in Palliative and EoL care. The ICB will communicate any developments on this workstream when they occur.

Contact

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