



NHS England, North Midlands
Primary Care Contracting Team
Birch House
Southwell Road West
Rainworth
Mansfield
Nottinghamshire
NG21 0HJ

liz.gundel@nhs.net
01138 255461

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Sent by email to; community pharmacies in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, Area Managers, Superintendent Pharmacists and the Chief Officers of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire LPC.

Dear Colleague

Community pharmacy provision of blister pack monitored dosage systems (MDS)

We have recently had a concern raised by a local pharmacy contractor regarding the refusal by other pharmacies to provide blister pack monitored dosage systems to patients who are eligible to receive 'reasonable adjustment' to enable them to comply with their prescribed medicine regimes. The refusal appears to be based on the grounds that pharmacies do not have capacity to provide blister packs MDS.

NHS England, North Midlands wish to remind all pharmacy contractors that they have an existing and ongoing responsibility under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 and subsequent Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to their services and provide auxiliary aids where appropriate for people with disabilities.

It is the pharmacist's responsibility to assess whether patients are eligible for reasonable adjustment(s) to be made and what adjustment(s) would be most appropriate for the individual patient, not the prescriber. An assessment tool is available via the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) website as a guide - www.psnc.org.uk However, the use of any particular assessment tool is not mandatory and pharmacists should be mindful that it may not identify every disabled person, or the adjustments necessary.

A pharmacy **cannot refuse** to provide a blister pack to any patient who is eligible under the DDA to receive one because:

- The pharmacy/pharmacist does not have time to provide the service
- The pharmacy does not have enough room in the dispensary to provide the

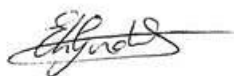
service, or do any more blister pack patients

- The pharmacy does not have enough staff to provide the service
- The pharmacy/pharmacist states that the GPs will not provide them with 7 day prescriptions and therefore the pharmacy is not able to dispense a blister pack compliance aid

Any pharmacy who claims that they are 'at capacity' will be in breach of their terms of service, and any complaints received from members of the public will be investigated by NHS England, North Midlands and if necessary, the appropriate action will be taken.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liz Gundel', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Liz Gundel
Contracts Manager
NHS England, North Midlands