**Patients advised how to access medicines**

If patients are in one of the clinically vulnerable groups and have no support network from friends, family or neighbours to collect medicine, they should speak to their nominated pharmacy to request delivery.

Dr Peter Gregory, local GP and chair at NHS West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), said: “We want to reassure patients that there is no need to stockpile medication and urge them to order their repeat prescriptions in the usual way as they did before the pandemic. Our POD and local pharmacies are receiving overwhelming demand so it’s important we all access these services sensibly. It is also crucial that those most in need also ask for help where needed”.

Patients are also being reminded of the importance of not presenting at a pharmacy if you or someone that you live with is showing symptoms of Covid-19, in order to help keep local people and staff safe.

Frequently Asked Questions to the Prescribing Ordering Direct (POD) Service:

Q. Can I have an inhaler?

A. Unless you have a confirmed diagnosis of a chronic respiratory condition (such as asthma) pharmacies cannot accept requests for inhalers.

Q. Can I take ibuprofen?

A. If you currently use anti-inflammatory medication (such as ibuprofen) for non-Covid-19 related conditions (such as arthritis) you should continue to do so.

Q. Can I have some paracetamol?

A. Paracetamol will only be provided if it is already routinely prescribed as part of a repeat prescription.

Q. Is it safe to take ibuprofen to treat Covid-19?

A. There is insufficient evidence linking ibuprofen and Covid-19, and whether it can help or hinder recovery. However, it can be used alongside paracetamol to help ease some of the symptoms of Covid-19, such as fever and headache. Please follow correct guidance for usage when taking over the counter medicines and follow NHS advice if your symptoms worsen.

Q. Can I have a rescue pack?

A. You should not contact your GP practice, pharmacy or POD for a rescue pack. You should continue to manage your condition in the usual way and if you feel that you have symptoms of Covid-19 you should go to <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19> before doing anything else.

Q: My B12 injections is no longer available, what can I do?

A.B12 injections have been stopped to protect staff and patients. We recommend patients who normally receive an injection take high dose B12 tablets 1mg (1000mcg) a day.  Available to buy from pharmacies or online.

To find out what health services are available in West Lancashire and how to access them during the Covid-19 pandemic, please visit the CCG’s website: <https://bit.ly/CCGCOVID>