

Prescriptions

- The turnaround time for standard prescriptions is now three (3) working days (previously two (2) working days).
- While most prescriptions are turned around quicker than this, the three-day period takes the stress off the system, when a GP is away for any length of time and particularly as we are short staffed.
- Any prescription required within the three-day period is considered **URGENT** and carries an additional charge.
- We often hear 'I only have one pill left' when patients call wanting repeat prescriptions.
- For those requiring regular medications we suggest using a diary or reminder app to schedule when to request a prescription.
- All regular medications must be ordered via your Manage My Health portal

- An **urgent prescription** cause's disruption into the day of your GP as usually they are required in between consultations to get this sorted – this delays consultations and can put the schedule of the GP under considerable strain.

A repeat prescription is more than just a click of button!

Despite what many may think, a prescribing clinician needs to go through a routine of things to check before they can issue a repeat prescription.

It is important to realise that it is not necessarily the GP you may be registered with that may provide your prescription. It can be that a prescriber that does not know you may be requested to access your notes in response to your request. This happens often when the prescription is urgent and a prescriber is on leave, off sick or on their scheduled time off.

A prescription is a legal document. To issue a prescription, a prescribing clinician needs to check that your prescription meets the requirements of the Medical Council and Medicines Controls Act:

- **When was the last time you were seen by a clinician either in-clinic or virtually?** This is important as you may need clinical review. Prescribers can legally only roll over a prescription a certain number of times, depending on the condition, how stable it is, the type of medication, and best practice protocols. You may need to have a **clinical measurement or blood test to ensure** that the drug does not do you harm, or that it is still producing the clinical results required.
- **When was the last time blood tests and other monitoring were done?** This is especially important if you are on medications for management of a long-term condition. If this has not been done within the last 12 months you may be given a short supply of your medications and asked to go for a blood test or ECG.
- **Were you in hospital (either ED, admitted to a ward at Wellington or Hutt hospitals), or have you seen an external specialist, or had surgery with an external specialist recently?** While we receive discharge summaries from some external providers, we do not get all of them, so we need to check whether any medications have changed or been added
- **Whether the timing of the prescription is appropriate.** Many patients forget they have a repeat prescription available at the pharmacy. Sometimes it may not be appropriate to re-prescribe medicines that are a controlled substance, as these prescriptions are only valid for 30 days. The clinician also needs to check on compliance with the intended treatment.
- **Whether there are any medicines that won't work well together.** This happens often when you are asking for a medication that has not been prescribed for a while. You may have had medications prescribed that could interact or are contra-indicated – sometimes this occurs after medications are started or changed by a specialist or hospital.