

## Medicines waste in Richmond costs around £1.1 million a year\*

The average value of a prescription item in England in 2014 was £8.32.

The NHS prescription charge is simply a NHS contribution; it does not reflect the cost of the medicine prescribed and in many cases it is less than the cost of the medicine itself.

If you pay for more than 12 prescribed medicines each year or more than three prescribed medicines in three months you could save money with a Prescription Pre-payment Certificate (PPC), which is available:

- Online at [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/ppc](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/ppc) or
- Call **0300 330 1341** or
- Fill in form FP95 which is available from pharmacies and GP practices

Medicine waste is a serious and growing problem within the NHS. Sometimes, patients or their carers continue to request more repeat medicines than they really need and stockpile them at home.

To get the best from your medicines, ask your GP or pharmacist for advice.

\* estimate based on national figures



## How can you help?

You can help reduce medicines waste by:

- ✓ Checking what medicines you still have at home before ordering your prescription.
- ✓ Only ticking the boxes on your repeat prescription forms for medicines you currently need.
- ✓ Not ordering a medicine you don't need at that time. You will still be able to order that medicine in the future when you need it.
- ✓ Checking your dispensed medicines: If you use the electronic prescription or repeat dispensing service, tell your pharmacist if they give you medicines you're no longer using or already have enough of at home, **before you leave the pharmacy.**
- ✓ Ordering online via your GP website which may also be quicker and more convenient for you.
- ✓ Discussing your medication with your pharmacist or GP on a regular basis.
- ✓ Telling your GP or pharmacist if you've stopped taking any medicines, so they can be removed from your repeat list.
- ✓ Not stockpiling medicines.

Remember ... take control of your medicines and only order what you need



# Need help with your medicines?

It's okay to ask your GP or pharmacist.

Find out inside how you can take control of your medicines.



"IT'S OKAY TO ASK"  
about medicines...

[www.richmondccg.nhs.uk](http://www.richmondccg.nhs.uk)  
 @NHSRichmondCCG

## Help us to reduce medicine waste in Richmond

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Not taking your medicines correctly could make your condition worse and waste NHS money.

### Unused medicines can be a health risk

Unused medicines kept at home are a safety risk for children, can go out of date or you could find yourself taking a medicine that has been stopped by your GP.

### Return unused medicines to a pharmacy

Unopened, unused and out-of-date medicines should be returned to pharmacies **not** your GP for disposal.

Even if not opened, once medicines leave the pharmacy they cannot be recycled or used by anyone else.

This is because once they have left the pharmacy, their safety and effectiveness cannot be guaranteed. Not many people would be happy about receiving somebody's returned medicines without these guarantees.

### Disposing of unwanted needles and syringes, contaminated dressings and other clinical waste:

Essentia Community Services provide free waste collections for Richmond borough residents who administer medications at home. Telephone **020 8254 8337** to request a clinical waste collection.

## Please tell your GP or pharmacist if you have stopped taking your medicine

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GPs and pharmacists understand that sometimes people struggle with taking their medicines.

You may be worried about side effects, or you may not want to take a medicine if you think it isn't helping you.

Don't be afraid to tell your GP or pharmacist if you have stopped taking any of your medicines.

It is important to take your medicines properly and they will be happy to help.

Not taking your medicines correctly could make your condition worse and waste NHS time and money.

You can make decisions with your GP and pharmacist to make sure your medicines work well for you.

You could make an appointment to discuss with your GP or ask your pharmacist for a free Medicines Use Review, where available.

If you find it difficult to remember to take your medicines, you can also talk to them about reminder charts, dose record charts and daily medicine boxes (only suitable for a few patients and your needs may mean it is not a suitable aid). Larger, easier to read labels are also available, on request.

## What should I do with my medicines if I need to go into hospital?

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**Always take your prescription and non-prescription medicines (i.e. over-the-counter medicines, or herbal remedies) with you when you go into hospital.**

The medicines you bring into hospital will remain your property.

The hospital's experienced pharmacy staff will check the medicines are suitable for use. During your stay, you will continue taking your usual medicine, if it is appropriate.

If these medicines are still appropriate for you they will be returned to you to take home. If they run out before or by the end of your stay, the hospital will reissue you with some more.

When you go into hospital your medicines may be changed. This can be confusing and it is okay to ask for any changes to be explained to you.

Old medicines at home may no longer be the right ones. Your GP can make sure that your repeat prescription is up to date.

Once you have left hospital speak to your GP or pharmacist to make sure you are taking the right medicines. You can also ask your pharmacist for a free New Medicine Service, where available.

