



# What you told us about prescription ordering

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# Report summary

## What is this report about?

This report highlights the findings from a survey that aimed to gather information from people about how they order their prescriptions, the method they use and their views on how well this works. The survey was carried out in October 2023.

## What did we do?

We developed a short survey that was available online for 2 weeks in early October. This was shared through our Healthwatch Wiltshire channels and by Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (BSW ICB). We also visited several pharmacies across Wiltshire to hear patients' views on prescription ordering.

## What were the key findings?

- Most people who responded to the survey use SystmOnline (36%) to get their prescriptions. The next most popular were Prescription Ordering Direct (POD) (26%) and NHS App (18%).
- 80% of respondents have repeat prescriptions and 60% of those who answered said that their medication is extremely important to them.
- Blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes were the main medical conditions for which people were prescribed medication.
- Most respondents found getting their prescriptions easy, although there were several comments about long waits to get the medication.
- Several people were worried by shortages or unavailability of their brand of medication which had led to delays and frequently having to obtain a new prescription. They told us that often they would have to visit multiple pharmacies to find medication.
- People using POD were less satisfied with the service than those using NHS App, SystmOnline or online pharmacies.
- There are wide differences across Wiltshire in the options used to get prescriptions.

## Conclusions and recommendations

Generally, people told us they found ordering their prescriptions easy or very easy. Prescriptions were ordered in a variety of ways depending on where the respondents lived and there were several key themes that came through. This report makes several recommendations based on what we heard.

# Introduction

**Healthwatch is your local health and social care champion. We're here to listen to the issues that really matter to people and to hear about your experiences of using local health and social care services.**

Healthwatch uses your feedback to better understand the challenges facing the NHS and other care providers and we make sure your experiences improve health and care for everyone – locally and nationally. We can also help you to get the information and advice you need to make the right decisions for you and to get the support you deserve.

The restrictions arising from the Covid pandemic brought about significant changes in how people ordered and collected their medication, and some of these methods have now become established. In April 2023, as part of the new Integrated Care System, pharmacy services in Wiltshire became the responsibility of Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (BSW ICB).

BSW ICB wanted to know more about how the different options for ordering prescriptions are used and asked Healthwatch Wiltshire to undertake a short survey to inform them. The timeframe for this work was set by BSW ICB and we had a short period of time for engagement and reporting. Due to this, we may not have reached as many or as diverse a range of participants as we would have liked.

## What we did

We prepared a short questionnaire, agreed with BSW ICB, which we used as the basis for our survey. This was launched online in early October for two weeks. Our Healthwatch staff and volunteers also took paper copies to several pharmacies across Wiltshire, where we talked to patients as they collected their prescriptions. The survey was widely promoted through Healthwatch Wiltshire's website and social media channels.

BSW ICB also publicised the survey by sending it out to all Wiltshire pharmacies, Primary Care Networks (a group of GP practices working together) and GP surgeries.



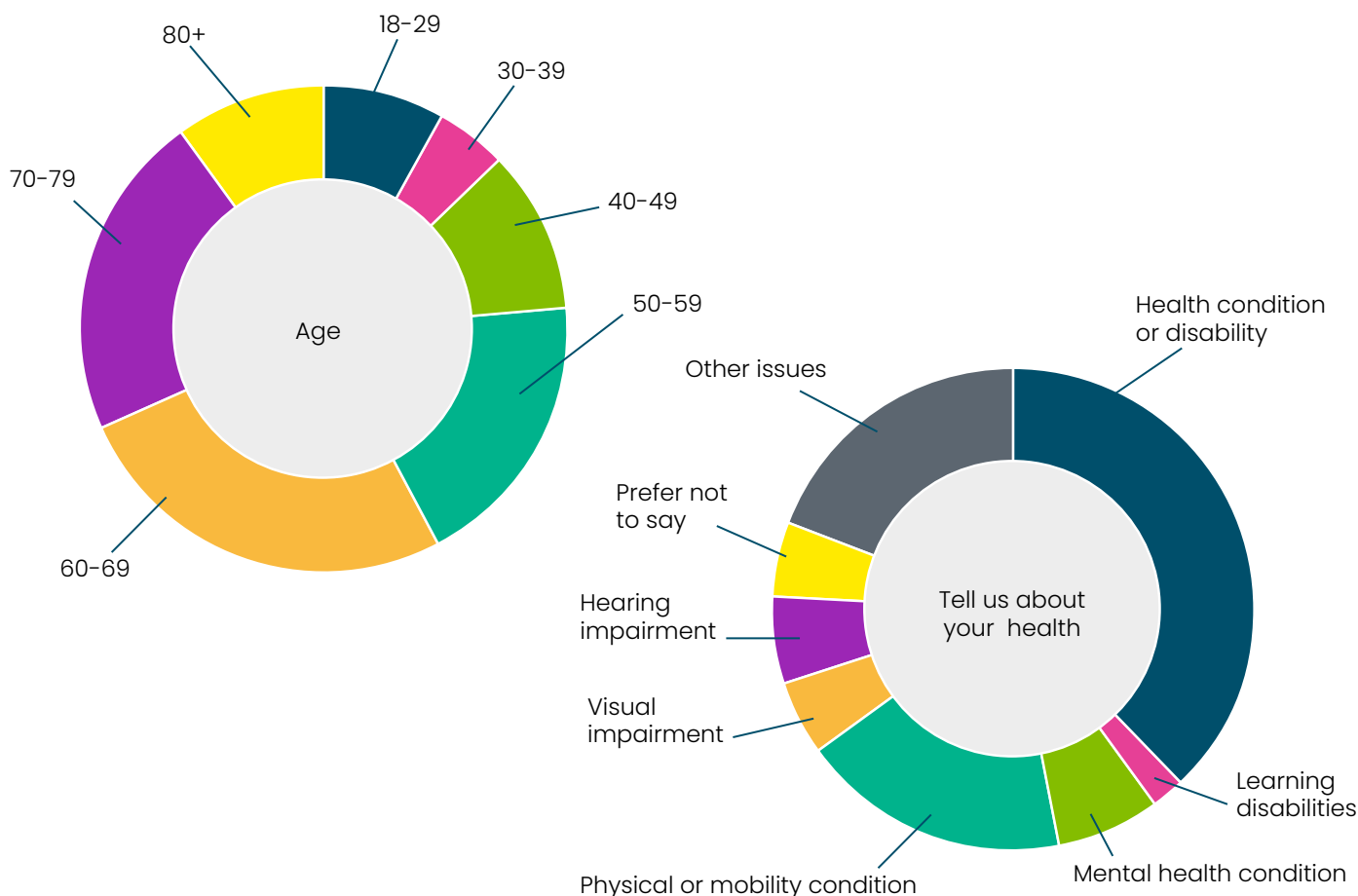
# Who did we hear from?

- We received 380 responses to our survey.
- 278 were completed and 102 were partially completed.
- 200 of the completed responses were from Wiltshire residents, 75 from Swindon and 3 from Bath.
- As the survey referred only to Wiltshire, the Swindon responses were separated out and a summary of their content is given in Appendix 3.

The majority (155) of the Wiltshire respondents were female (78%) and 41 (21%) were male. Three people did not want to specify their gender identity and 1 person declined to answer. When asked about their ethnicity, 198 people responded. 93% of respondents (185) described themselves as White British, 2 as Eastern European, 1 as Irish, 1 as Caribbean, 1 Boater, 1 British Asian, 1 White and Asian and 1 other White mixed background. Five respondents preferred not to identify their ethnicity.

Responses were received from a wide range of ages from 18 to over 80 and across the breadth of Wiltshire, although it should be noted that only one response was received from Salisbury. See Appendix 1 for more details.

We also asked people if they had any health conditions and if they cared for someone day to day who needs additional support. 160 people replied that they were not carers, 33 did care for someone who needed additional support and 3 preferred not to say.

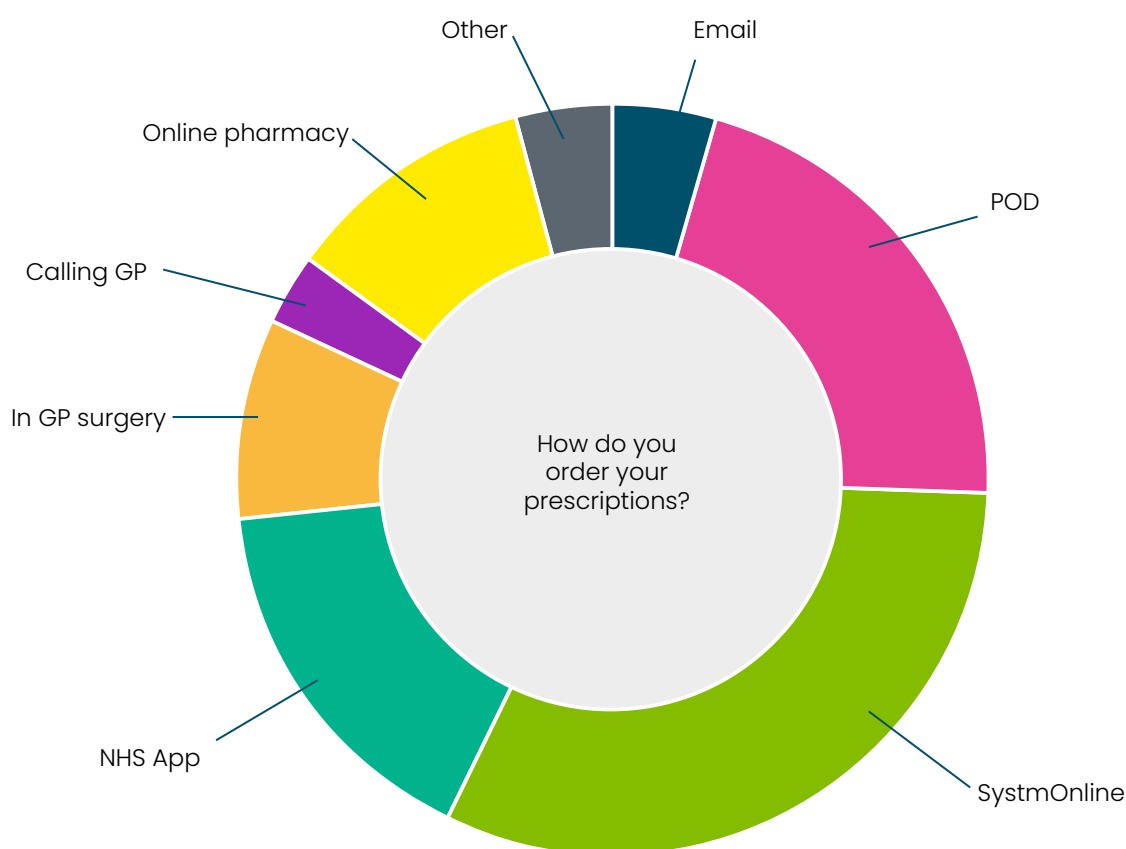


# What you told us

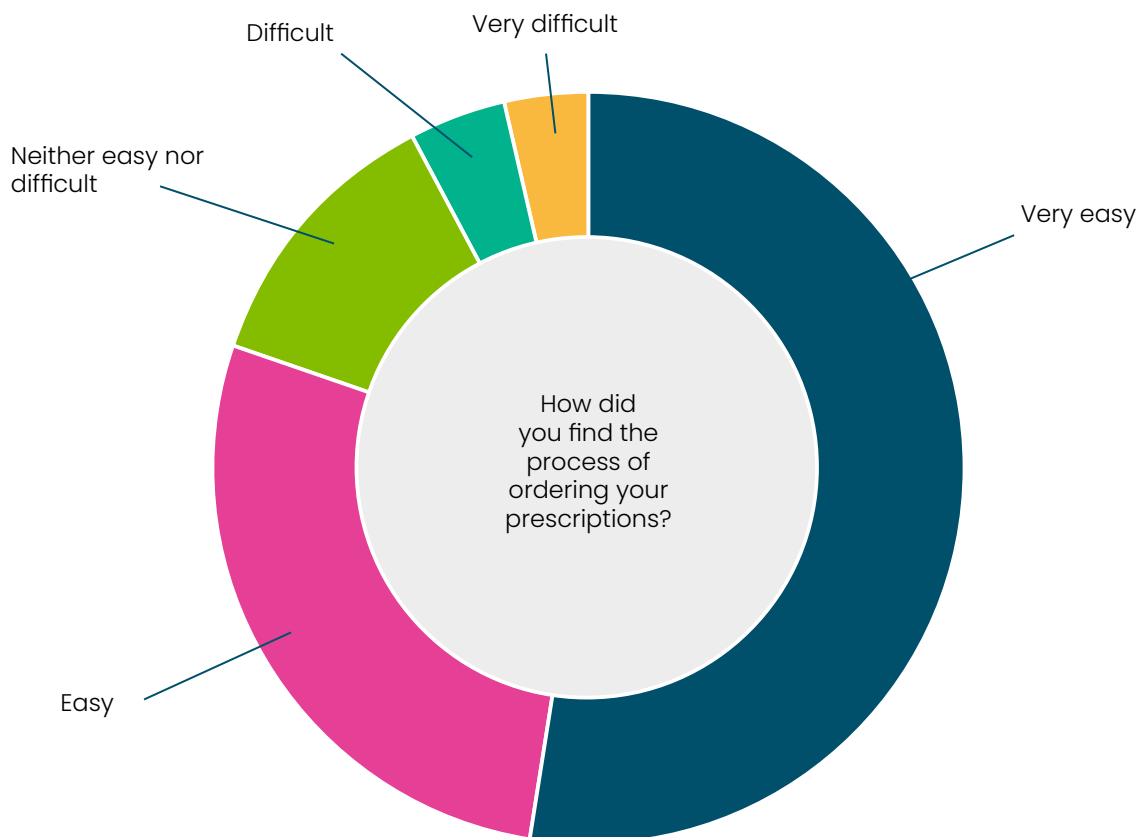
Our first question asked people how they order their prescriptions. 200 people gave us their answers, 10 of whom selected multiple options for ordering prescriptions which accounts for the 223 answers received.

The responses varied across Wiltshire, with certain areas showing greater use of Prescription Ordering Direct (POD) and others barely using it at all, preferring SystmOnline. Variations may be due to the system used by the local surgery or Primary Care Network (PCN) - for example, Devizes GP practices use SystmOnline - rather than patient choice.

When we asked whether people ordered repeat prescriptions, 190 respondents said they ordered repeat prescriptions, while 10 did not.



We also asked how they would rank the process of ordering their prescriptions from very easy to very difficult. 80% of respondents found the process either easy or very easy.



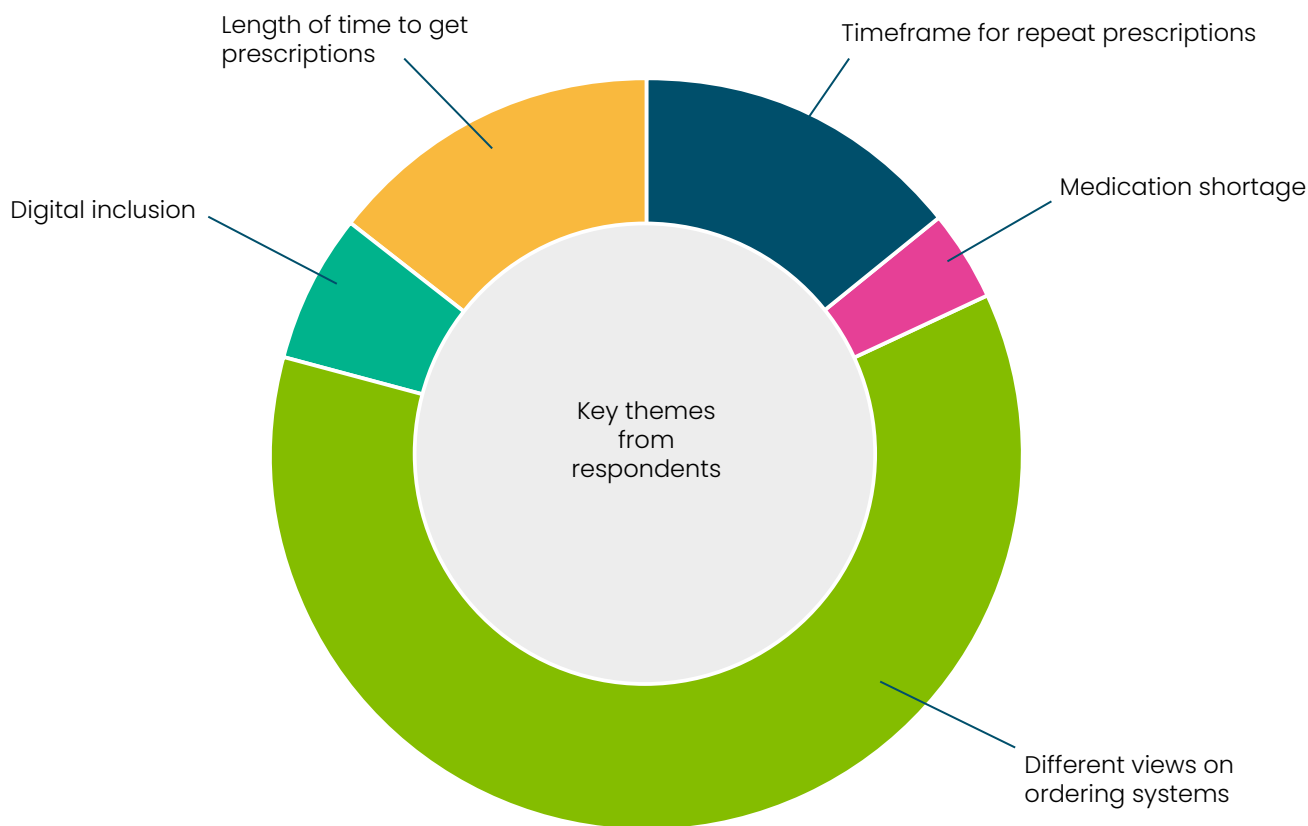
Most people (182 – 91%) told us that their prescriptions are extremely important or very important to them. The main reasons they gave for their responses were:

- Because their lives depended on their medication.
- Security of supply.
- They need to take the medication every day and any disruption would affect their health.

Finally, we asked people if there was anything else they would like to say about ordering their prescriptions. 95 people (47% of all those who completed the survey) provided comments. 32 comments were positive in nature, 39 were negative and 24 were neutral or mixed. Many of the comments highlighted how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the method of ordering prescriptions that they use.

Several recurring themes emerged, which are outlined in the next section.

# Key themes



## Theme 1: Short timeframe/lack of efficiency for repeat prescriptions

One of the key themes to emerge was frustration at not being able to get repeat prescriptions generally for longer than one month, particularly when a person had a long term condition. Several suggested that having a longer timeframe would provide cost and time savings to both the NHS and the patient.

The practice of dispensing only 4 weeks of medication at a time makes for multiple requests a year - adding to the workload of overstretched GPs. If it is a long term prescription which has been seen to be appropriate, it would save everyone's time (and therefore money) to dispense more in one go.

I think for regular prescriptions that are settled, people should be able to get several months in one go and not having to ask for next prescription each month or 2 monthly.

What would save even more time, especially that of either the POD or GP, would be to ensure the number of tablets/amount of liquid is the same on all medication so that you order [eg] once a month and don't have to log back in for another medication a week or so later.



I like the “squirrel” system operated by the GP and the pharmacy. Meds check every six months at the GPs, then a prescription for a further six months is sent to the pharmacy, who dispense it a month at a time in response to an email from me and send me a text when it is ready for collection.

I would REALLY appreciate getting more than 28 days’ worth at a time. I have been on the same medication for 45 years so surely I can be trusted with it?! The doctor would happily prescribe more but is tied to the rules. This would greatly cut down the prescription admin for him, the surgery, the pharmacy and of course ME! As I often travel, sometimes for longer than 28 days, managing the prescription delivery is sometimes impossible and I have completely run out.

I find it very frustrating that, whilst I am able to order my own prescriptions online, I can’t do this for my children.

## Theme 2: Concern about medication shortages/unavailability

Another key theme was around the availability of certain medications. We were told how people struggle to obtain their medications due to shortages and had to visit several pharmacies in search of supplies. We also heard how specific brands of medications were prescribed and, if these were not available, patients had to return to the GP surgery for another prescription to allow the medicine to be dispensed. Several women using Hormone Replacement Therapy emphasised how important it was to them to keep consistency of medication and their anxiety over this concern.

Local pharmacy which coped very creditably during the pandemic is now struggling hugely to fulfil prescriptions on time. Several times now I have been impacted by a national shortage of specific medications.

The issue is not the ordering, it’s receiving the medicine. There is a long delay between ordering and pharmacy acting on it. It’s always chaos at our pharmacy – long queues, people going in and their prescriptions not being there or the pharmacy not having the medication. I have witnessed this in the pharmacy multiple times. Personally, I have struggled to get my medication and had to take my prescription to multiple pharmacies to obtain medication, and struggled because the script is a specific brand rather than a generic one so although pharmacy has the medicine it can’t dispense as it’s a different brand name.

Recently there was a problem with no supply an eye ointment I needed. I did not know that the pharmacist could not get that particular make till I went to collect the med. Request for an alternative has to go via a GP – the second prescription was also not available. A third prescription required me to go to a different pharmacy. By this time I had run out. If I had been notified of a supply issue at the start I could have managed this better; also if the chemist could dispense an equivalent without me having to go back to the surgery.

### Theme 3: differing views on types of prescriptions ordering systems

People's responses showed differing views of the different options for ordering prescriptions. It was noticeable that some geographical areas had adopted particular systems, eg widespread use of POD in Malmesbury and Trowbridge areas, but almost unused in the Devizes locality. Some systems seem to be more popular with patients than others.

There were 7 comments about difficulty accessing POD by phone. For several respondents, mostly elderly, telephone is the only available method as they either are not online or do not feel confident using the online ordering process (see Theme 4). Most people using the NHS App seemed satisfied with their ability to order prescriptions effectively. SystmOnline also scored well in terms of satisfaction but not all GP surgeries in Wiltshire offer this option.

Comments indicated how satisfied respondents were with their prescription ordering service.

#### NHS App

- I prefer to pick up prescriptions locally as I have ordered online before and had problems with obtaining the correct medications when I need them.
- Find Marlborough very quick and efficient when using the [NHS] App.
- The NHS App listed the last order date of each prescription, but it would be brilliant if it could also show the last fulfilment date by the pharmacy. This would not only save patients from making journeys to the pharmacies, only to find the prescription isn't available yet, but it would also help GP to track when patients have collected their prescriptions.
- NHS App is excellent, and simple to use. A great system.
- My child is on various long term medications and being a full time working mother means I have little time to wait in call queues. The NHS App is my preferred method.

#### SystmOnline

- My daughter uses the NHS App for her repeats but we have only just had it explained that the meds disappear from the app until the window for reordering is within date. SystmOnline shows all meds and tells you when you can reorder so is much clearer I think, plus it has a custom request box so you can add comments.
- I only have one item on repeat prescription. SystmOnline is cumbersome to use but it's better than the old system of calling up the surgery on the phone.

## Online pharmacy

I use Pharmacy2U and so does my wife. It is brilliant. I can order either through a browser on my laptop or through an app on my phone, tablet or Chromebook. The whole process can take up to 7 days but I have learnt by submitting on a Sunday, my GP usually approves by Tuesday latest and my order is delivered by Friday courtesy of Royal Mail. I can track my parcel and Royal Mail tell me when they will deliver.

## POD

I find the POD service easy to navigate, easily contactable, the staff go above and beyond. The system in place is far better than previous experiences.

Very difficult to get through to POD on the phone. Long wait depending on time of day.

Frustrating getting through to POD. I have no landline or broadband as cannot afford it so rely on my mobile. First few months of ordering was diabolical! 98th in queue for phone to POD and I am on a Pay as You Go mobile. Rang back following week and was 45th in queue. checked with phone provider and call cost £8.00 which is a lot as a pensioner.

The email I use is the POD "emergency" email address introduced during lockdown as it was almost impossible to get through to POD on the phone. It is very easy to use and I have not had to make any arrangements with my GP to use it. I dread this email service being withdrawn as the POD phone service was unsatisfactory (difficult to get through, intrusive questioning about the requested prescription) and I do not wish to go through my GP to authorise use of an alternative email service.

Constantly having to chase POD to get prescriptions on time. Very annoying. Not pleased with service.

## Theme 4: Digital inclusion – poor Internet availability or inability/lack of confidence to use online service

For some, particularly elderly patients, digital exclusion is a factor. Poor internet service, and/or lack of confidence can have an impact on the way they have to order their prescriptions.

My GP surgery only allow repeat prescriptions via POD. I am 93 and cannot do this myself, I rely on a neighbour to do it for me. Previously I was able to independently order my own prescription by going to the pharmacy. My ability to order my own prescriptions and my independence has been reduced by POD. This system does not work for me or promote independence.

Before pandemic, could drop prescription at chemist and they would get it signed by GP. Very difficult for me to get to GP surgery as can't walk very far and have to take a taxi to get there which costs £6 for a return journey. I am not online. This has all changed since Covid.

I don't think it is easy for older generation to use internet always for ordering.

In rural areas how can elderly patients without their own transport get their regular repeat prescription supplies delivered to their homes? Other than ordering online to pharmacies to make free postal deliveries, is there any alternative?

## Theme 5: Length of time to process and receive prescriptions

The final theme concerns the time it takes to process and receive prescriptions. People told us how they had experienced long waiting times from ordering the prescription to them being ready for collection. Some people also told of long waits while in the pharmacy as the prescriptions were made up, as they waited despite having been ordered several days before. There also seem to be some discrepancies in the timeframes between ordering and collection, with different services suggesting different turnaround times.

The ordering is the easiest part, I have to ensure I order at least 9 days in advance of needing them because of the time it takes to process.

Always told to order a week in advance but it takes another week nearly for prescription to get to pharmacy. I email POD. After hospital, it took 6 months to amend and synchronise medication. Still not working properly. Staff are wonderful at POD but system is not working for me. Keep finding medications are missed off prescription. Not pleased at all and not impressed.

Prescription is NEVER ready when I come to pharmacy, always have to wait for prescription to be made up and don't understand why. Told 7 days' notice though POD says 5 working days.

Sometimes a long wait: 7 days from ordering. Prescription should be available 7 days after ordering but often isn't, or pharmacy have not dispensed. Waited 30 minutes for last prescription at pharmacy.

Prescription not ready at stated time - third visit to pick it up and still not available.

Only able to order monthly so requiring constant re-ordering. Then takes a week to arrive and is often late for delivery date to my home. Always touch and go to get it in time - have to stay in all day on delivery day as no time specified.

There was particular frustration about the multiple brands of medications and how, if the one specified on the prescription was unavailable, the pharmacist could not provide a similar but differently branded medication. This meant the patient having to return to the GP to get another prescription, often resulting in delays and the patient running out of medicine.

Several people's comments included suggestions on how the system could be improved.

The NHS app listed the last order date of each prescription, but it would be brilliant if it could also show the last fulfilment date by the pharmacy.

If it is a long term prescription which has been seen to be appropriate it would save everyone's time (and therefore money) to dispense more in one go (GP, pharmacist, patient). Likewise it would help if multiple prescriptions were set up so you only needed to put one request in (ie everything runs out at the same time) rather than finding you need to do another request 2 weeks later for another med.

Request for an alternative has to go via a GP - the second prescription was also not available. A third prescription required me to go to a different pharmacy. By this time I had run out. If I had been notified of a supply issue at the start I could have managed this better; also if the chemist could dispense an equivalent without me having to go back to the surgery.

Clearer information for patients to understand the process and manage expectations is essential.

Ensure the number of tablets/amount of liquid is the same on all medication so you order [eg] once a month and don't have to log back in for another medication a week or so later.

If you've got a long term condition, they should prescribe more than 1 month's worth.

Could be automated. Amazon locker style.

Other than ordering online to pharmacies to make free postal deliveries is there any alternative?

# Conclusions

Most people who responded to the survey both online and in person were satisfied with the process for getting their prescriptions, and these were ordered in a variety of ways, with POD, SystemOnline and NHS App being the most popular.

Frustration was expressed at the length of time to get medication and with errors on prescriptions, particularly via POD. Concern was also expressed about the availability of specifically branded medications and the requirement to return to the GP for the prescription to be altered. People noted the shortage of pharmacists and some were anxious about closure of their local pharmacy.

Several people (11) expressed frustration at the one month timeframe for repeat prescriptions and asked why longer term prescriptions, ie for 2 or even 6 months, in the case of long term health conditions, could not be given instead. They felt this would be more efficient for patients, GPs and pharmacies, saving everyone time and money.

# Recommendations

Based on our findings we make the following recommendations:

- Improve awareness of the NHS App among patients, as most people only use the system selected by their GP surgery or Primary Care Network.
- Consider increasing the length of timeframe for repeat prescriptions.
- Improve the reliability of collection or delivery dates for prescriptions.
- Address concerns about availability/shortage of medications.
- Consider how changes to brands of medication could be accommodated without needing to revisit a surgery for a new prescription if the prescribed medication is not available.
- Ensure patients are aware that some pharmacists offer a delivery and a postal service.

## Thank you!

Thank you to everyone that responded to the survey, the pharmacies that allowed us to visit and talk to patients, and our volunteers who supported this project.



# Response

## Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board

6 We are very grateful to everyone for taking time to either talk in person, or fill in this Healthwatch designed survey, which helps inform us on the experiences of a range of repeat prescribing methods used across BSW and how they compare.

We will be reviewing the feedback and using it to help inform our understanding. We recognise not just the different perspectives reflected in the report, but also the differing needs of our population with some patients potentially very well served by digital solutions and others where alternative access routes are more suitable.

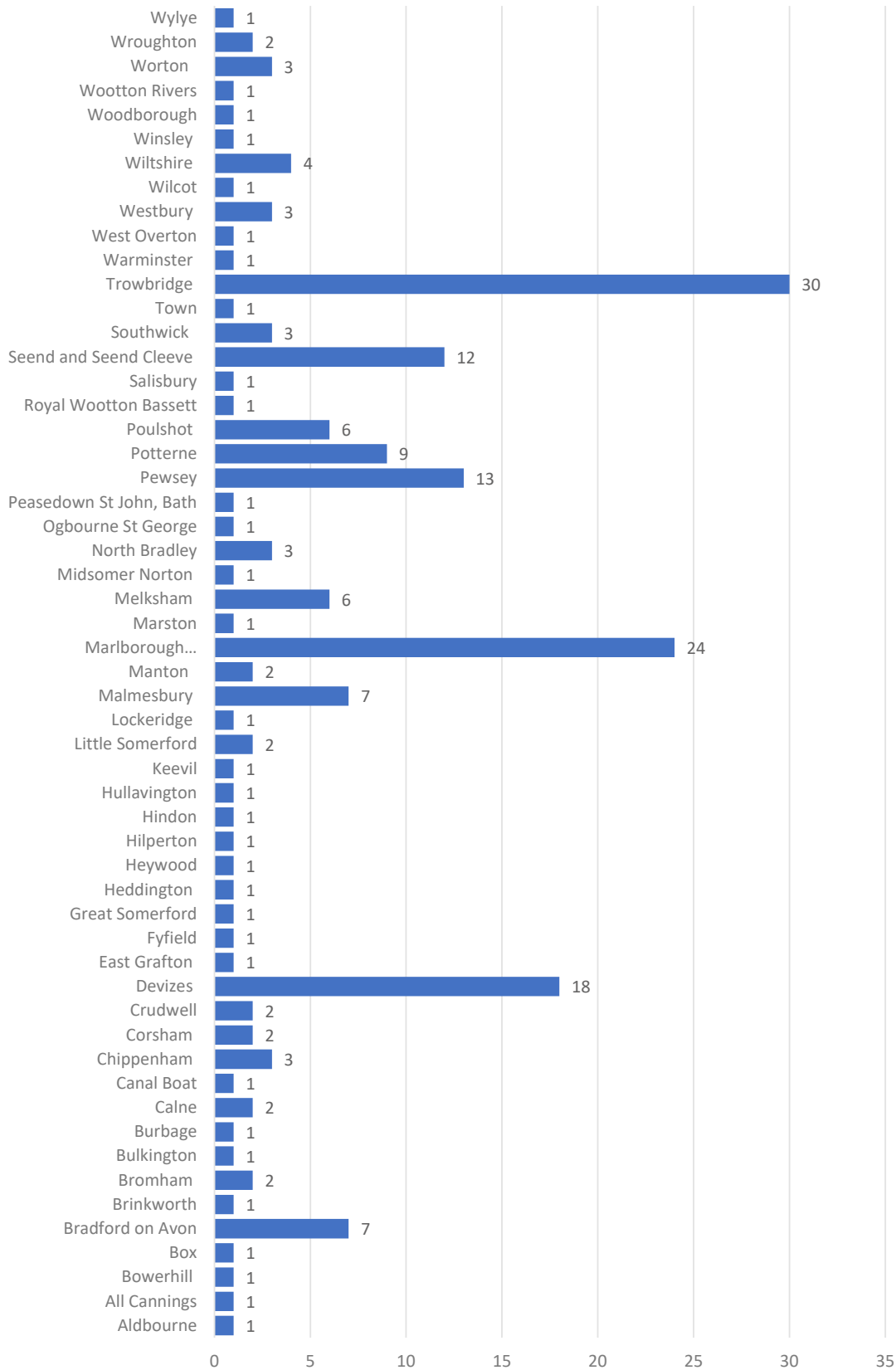
We have also been listening to a broad range of stakeholders and we will now bring all of the feedback together to help inform our planning. Should anything need to be undertaken differently we will be clearly communicating in a planned and considered way.

We would also like to acknowledge the hard work of the Healthwatch Wiltshire staff and their volunteers in bringing these views and reflections to our attention. We look forward to continuing to work with all Healthwatch groups across BSW to ensure we hear from our population about their experiences.



# Appendix 1

## Location of respondents



# Appendix 2



## How do you order your prescriptions?

### 1. Background

Healthwatch Wiltshire gathers feedback from local people about health and social care services. We are working with Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (BSW ICB) to find out how people order their prescriptions and repeat prescriptions and how they find this process.

The information you provide is confidential. We will use the information shared to write a report, that will be publicly available and shared with services to highlight what works well and what could be improved or developed in the future. We may use anonymous quotes in this report.

#### 1. How do you order your prescriptions?

- Email
- Prescription Ordering Direct (POD)
- System one (Systmonline)
- NHS app
- In the GP Surgery
- Calling the GP Surgery
- Online pharmacy
- Other (please specify):

#### 2. Do you order repeat prescriptions?

- Yes
- No

#### 3. How do you find the process of ordering your prescriptions?

- Very easy
- Easy
- Neither easy nor difficult

- Difficult
- Very difficult

**4. How important is prescription ordering to you?**

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not so important
- Not at all important

Please tell us why you chose this answer

**5. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about prescription ordering?**

### 3. Please tell us a bit about you

By telling us more information about yourself, you will help us better understand how people's experiences may differ depending on their personal characteristics. However, if you do not wish to answer these questions you do not have to.

**6. Please tell us the city, town or village you live in?**

**7. What gender do you identify as?**

- Male
- Female

- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say
- Prefer to self describe/ Other (please specify):

**8. What is your age?**

- Under 18
- 18-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60 -69
- 70-79
- 80+

**9. What ethnicity would you identify as?**

**White**

- British
- Irish
- Gypsy/traveller/boater
- Eastern European
- Other

**Asian or Asian British**

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Any other Asian background

**Mixed**

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and black African
- White and Asian
- Any other mixed background

**Black or Black British**

- Caribbean

- African
- Any other black background

**Other Ethnic Group**

- Chinese
- Any other Ethnic Group
- I do not wish to disclose my ethnic origin

**10. Do you consider yourself to have a health condition or disability?**

- No
- Learning disability
- Mental health condition
- Physical or mobility disability
- Visual impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify):

**11. Do you care for someone who needs extra support day to day?**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

## 4. Thankyou!

Your details will be held securely and in compliance with data protection laws. They will only be used for the purposes of carrying out Healthwatch Wiltshire activity. Your details will not be shared with any other organisation. You may unsubscribe or withdraw your consent to us holding your details at any time by emailing [info@healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk) or calling 01225 434218.

Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey.



# Appendix 3

## Feedback from Swindon respondents



The following findings were gathered from feedback provided by 75 respondents in Swindon. As Swindon was not included within the scope of the exercise commissioned by BSW ICB, their responses are not included in the main report.

In contrast to the Wiltshire respondents who completed the survey as individuals, 12 of the 75 responses from Swindon were from care homes, which provided another perspective.

89% of respondents (66) described themselves as White British, 2 as White Other, 2 as Pakistani, 1 as Bangladeshi, 1 as White and Asian, 2 people preferred not to say and 1 person skipped this question. The majority of respondents (50) identified as female, 22 as male and 3 people preferred not to say.

The age profile of Swindon respondents was quite evenly spread across age groups, though the care homes did not specify the age of their residents.



In response to our first question on how people ordered their prescriptions, 61% of Swindon respondents (46) use POD, with the NHS App the next most popular (17%) closely followed by SystemOnline (15%).



 I answered Difficult because there is often a long queue when phoning. It is extremely important to get my call in on time because you have to wait 5 working days after ordering the meds, all of which are essential to maintaining my health. (POD) 

Only 1 person selected 'Other' option, which was Airmid.

Of the 75 Swindon respondents, 74 ordered repeat prescriptions and 81% of them found ordering prescriptions very easy or easy. Only 3 people found it very difficult and 8 described it as difficult. 59 people (79%) said that their prescription was extremely important to them and the main reasons given were:

- Continuity of treatment is essential to their health.
- Need for security of supply.
- Reduce anxiety about having timely medications.
- Duty to look after those in their care.

 We are responsible for ensuring that our 8 individuals have their medications as prescribed, ordering is completed in a timely manner and sufficient stock is in place. 

 I have a long term health condition, where I require my medication to remain feeling well. Therefore, having the ease of being able to order repeat prescriptions is extremely important to me as I am not reliant on having to spend time going into the surgery, on the phone, etc to re-order a prescription. 

61 people gave comments to explain their reasons for their answer. Some referred to their health condition and others to what they felt about the ordering system they used. Where people told us about their health condition for which they need medication, the main conditions were heart disease, diabetes and arthritis.

Finally, when we asked people if they wanted to say anything else about prescriptions ordering, 31 respondents gave us their comments. 17 were positive, 11 negative, 2 were mixed and 1 stated that they were a care home. Key themes that emerged from these comments are:

- Differing perceptions between care homes and individuals of POD, which was the most used ordering method.
- Most care homes are positive about POD in contrast to several individuals who expressed frustration.
- Satisfaction with the NHS App.
- Suggestion that timeframes for repeat prescriptions could be longer.

The following quotes illustrate the views given by respondents.

## POD

- Working with POD for care home is such an easy job. This process makes the ordering medication for over 70 elderly people much easier. They are knowledgeable and professional.
- Using the POD is so easy and the staff are very competent, there is continuity for ourselves and the residents. It saves time and we can get through on the telephone very quickly, the system works very well.
- When we order from GP before was such a task. POD build a strong bridge between surgeries and care homes. An excellent service.
- I am on repeat medication for long term conditions, and need to order regularly, I currently order by email and it works very well, any problems I have experienced in the past, arise after the order reaches the pharmacy.
- POD has been brilliant I have two health problems terminal cancer and NSIP/COPD (Nonspecific Interstitial Pneumonia/Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) with asthma. Without POD's help I would have been in serious trouble health wise. Instead only had a chest infection due to a mix up with my steroids which I take daily to keep my chest and lung stable. I am 69 often having fatigue and brain fog terrified of POD closing as the staff are patient and understanding.
- Staff always helpful, very knowledgeable, always give you a straight answer. POD is a life saver.
- I have to order using POD as we have no other way to request. The line is always busy and lately it had got worse. They often just say the line is busy and to call back.

6 We have found that ordering through the POD has communication problems with our GP in getting the prescription ordered correct and on time. It should take 5 working days but, when attending pharmacy too many times they have either not received my request or it's just come in or even missing. Sometimes my prescription request has not been logged from either POD, doctors or pharmacy. I take 21 tablets each day mostly life-saving due to my health problems.

6 In my experience, it [POD] has massively protracted the process of getting a correct prescription. My most recent example - I ordered a prescription on 28 September through POD, and due to the inaccuracy of the processing at the outset, and a series of, perhaps coincidental, failures of the processing systems, it has led to me not being able to get my medication until 14 October.

### NHS App

6 In the NHS app is so easy, POD are a nightmare for me.

6 The process through the NHS App is simple and equally important for me is that my elderly parents are able to do it this way. I am then able to pick up prescriptions directly from the pharmacy nominated.

### Online pharmacy

6 My GP Surgery sends a batch prescription to Lloyds Direct and they send me a reminder every month when it's time to order my next batch of medication. This saves me from having to remember to do it myself. It also means I don't have to go to the local pharmacy to pick it up as they send it by post."

### Longer timeframe for repeat prescriptions

6 It would be really helpful if I was able to order more than one month's supply at a time.

6 There needs to be a central ordering system, which all surgeries should sign up to. Those without access to online systems should have a dedicated telephone line at their surgery. I am currently trying to set up LIVI [app], but keep being told they don't have access to my medical records, and have phoned my surgery to ask for permission, which they have done, but I am still getting the same message. Again, frustrating and timely for all.

6 The ability to order 3 months' supply of regular medicine and re-order within the last month of that supply so that no stoppages occur due to poor supply or no availability, either on the script or at the pharmacy, will assist with maintaining the level of medicine in the body system.

# Conclusions

The majority of people in Swindon who responded to our survey use POD to order their prescriptions and find it either easy or very easy. 99% of respondents get repeat prescriptions. However, the care homes were satisfied with the service they receive from POD, while individuals using this service were not so content. Some respondents indicated they would rather not use POD but have to do so as this is the method selected by their GP practice. Several respondents indicated concern that POD would be withdrawn as a service which they felt would be disadvantageous to them, "a step backwards".

As with Wiltshire respondents, several people mentioned their frustration with the month only timeframe for ordering repeat prescriptions, recommending that this should be extended.

# Recommendations

- A central ordering system, which all surgeries should sign up to.
- Better communication between doctors and the pharmacy.
- Increase the timeframe for repeat prescriptions from one month to help maintain regular medication.
- GP or pharmacist records should flag the need for an annual review prior to the repeat prescription expiring so that there is no interruption in provision to the patient of the required medication.





We are committed to the quality of our information. Every three years we carry out an in-depth audit so we can be certain of this.

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