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North of England
Commissioning Support Unit

RPOS update to Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

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Background

RPOS (Repeat prescription ordering systems) project is a joint initiative between North Durham, Durham Dales, Easington & Sedgefield, Darlington, Hartlepool & Stockton, and South Tees CCGs

Go – live date across the 5 CCGs was agreed as 2nd September 2019

Task & Finish group was convened in May, members included

- GPs, and practice managers
- Local Pharmaceutical Committee
- NECS MO staff
- Lay members of the public



Why RPOS?

Part of the self care agenda – encouraging patients to take back control of their medicines

Over a number of years – increase in “third party ordering” of repeat prescriptions on behalf of patients

Safety concerns and financial concerns

Why not tackled this sooner? It’s fallen into the “too hard to do box”

Other CCGs across the country, including Sunderland CCG had implemented this project successfully – we were able to learn from these earlier adopters



Initial activity

Robust project initiation document – roles clearly defined

Communication campaign – involving key stakeholders; patient letter and information leaflet developed for distribution to identified patients

GP practices encouraged to work with their local community pharmacies to keep patients informed of the planned changes

Briefing sessions held for GP practice prescribing clerks

Telephone numbers and email addresses available for patients to use if they needed more information – monitored by NECS MO staff



What happened?

GP practices identified suitable patients who needed to be contacted to inform them of potential changes to the way they order their repeat medication

GP practices able to suggest to patients other methods of ordering their medication

- Electronic repeat dispensing (ERD)
- GP on line
- NHS app
- Handing in their repeat prescription slip into the GP practice

Understandably some patients were concerned about the changes, and NECS MO, as well as GP practices and community pharmacies dealt with a number of issues.

No official complaints were received.



Post implementation update

The task & finish group is no longer meeting; RPOS is now seen as business as usual

Despite initial concerns and needing to work at pace over a large geographical area – RPOS implementation has been successful

GP practices and community pharmacies have worked well together to ensure patients have been able to manage their repeat prescription ordering in an appropriate and safe manner

Levels of ERD are increasing, % of patients ordering medication on line is increasing, it seems the number of prescription items dispensed is decreasing, with potential prescribing costs reducing - appropriately