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NCHA Guidance on Doorstep Delivery Procedure Changes for Clinical and Medicines Homecare Services in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Last Updated: 18 March 2020

Scope

This guidance has been developed in conjunction with NHS colleagues. It is applicable to all clinical and medicines homecare deliveries by National Clinical Homecare Association Member organisations effective from Monday 16th March until further notice. Following this guidance should enable the majority of homecare services to continue as routine. Further guidance is being prepared for provision of high risk homecare services requiring staff to take additional precautions and wear personal protective equipment when crossing the threshold to deliver homecare services.

Objective of the changes

The changes to delivery procedures is to minimise direct physical contact with patients during the doorstep delivery process and reduce any risk of cross-contamination for the delivery driver and the patient. We want both patients and delivery drivers to feel safe during this procedure.

Clinical and medicines homecare deliveries are generally low risk. Direct contact between drivers and recipients at the doorstep during routine deliveries is low risk, however, we are recommending additional precautions to maintain the confidence of staff and patients that all reasonable measures are being taken to protect them. The highest risk of COVID-19 transmission for routine deliveries is the collection of signatures as proof of delivery so specific measures are being recommended to reduce this risk.

By implementing this procedural change it will not be necessary for delivery drivers to wear masks, gloves or other personal protective equipment to make routine deliveries. If government advice changes we will review and update this procedure if required.

There are three standard delivery protocols to be followed. These will be communicated to patients to reassure them that all reasonable precautions are being taken. From the patient view, there is very little difference in the "Doorstep Delivery Protocol", just that they are not asked to sign a proof of delivery. The impact of this change will be most apparent within the Purchasing Authority financial approval processes and it is imperative that this change does not delay payment of homecare invoices.

According to prevailing government guidance, "Across the Threshold Deliveries" can continue with the precautions noted in this guidance unless the household is high risk e.g. in

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isolation due to COVID-19 positive result. In the majority of these high risk cases the “Observed Collection Protocol” will provide an adequate alternative to ensure patients receive the supplies they need. Further guidance is being prepared for provision of high risk homecare services requiring staff to take additional precautions and wear personal protective equipment when crossing the threshold to deliver homecare services.

Patients should be encouraged to tell patients services if they or anyone in their household has a positive COVID-19 result. Patient Services should confirm if any special arrangements are required when confirming “Across the Threshold Deliveries”.

Drivers should be pre-advised of patient status where possible, but they should not assume information provided by patient services is up-to-date and should be ready to follow alternative delivery protocols if necessary.

Doorstep Delivery Protocol

- Ring the doorbell or knock on door
- Step back and remain at the recommended distance of 2 metres (approx. 3 steps) from the doorstep
- Driver asks if any member of the household has tested positive for or is showing any signs or symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) or has been advised to or chosen to self-isolate and if yes, follow Observed Delivery Protocol. If No, continue as below
- Driver will complete delivery questions verbally to confirm correct recipient for the delivery
- Driver will hand the delivery package to the recipient (avoiding physical contact)
- Driver will complete POD signature on behalf of the recipient according to their organisation’s instruction including the words “COVID-19”. The recipient should not touch the e-POD device, clipboard, pen.

Observed Delivery Protocol

- Driver will complete delivery questions verbally to confirm correct recipient for the delivery
- Driver will not hand the delivery package directly to patients, instead they will ask the recipient to step away from the doorstep and place the delivery on the doorstep
- The driver will observe the recipient picking up the package(s) and taking it/them into their home
- At all points the driver must remain at least 2 metres away from the recipient and any member of the recipient’s household
- The driver must use their hand sanitiser immediately after completing the delivery

Across the Threshold Delivery Protocol

Driver Delivery Protocol (stock put-away / stock rotation / stock counting / removing packaging / fridge temperature checks):

- Ring the doorbell or knock on door
- Step back and remain at the recommended distance of 2 metres from the doorstep
- Driver asks if any member of the household has tested positive for Coronavirus (COVID-19) or is showing any signs or symptoms of or has been advised to or chosen to self-isolate. If anyone in the household has tested positive for Coronavirus

(COVID-19) or is showing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 the driver must follow “Observed Delivery Protocol”.

- Driver explains to the patient that the objective is to take reasonable precautions to keep them and other homecare patients safe. The same procedure is followed for all routine cross threshold deliveries. The driver will avoid physical contact whilst in their home and to minimise touching any surfaces as you put stock away.
- Gain consent from the patient to enter their home. If patient refuses consent to enter the home follow “Doorstep Delivery Protocol” or “Observed Delivery Protocol”. Drivers should be aware that patients who have routinely received cross threshold deliveries under normal circumstances may refuse consent if they have chosen to self-isolate as they are within a high risk patient group.
- Driver to use a hand sanitiser gel on the doorstep in view of the patient to provide reassurance.
- Driver to complete normal across the threshold activity while avoiding direct contact with the patient or other members of the household and minimising touching hard surfaces.
- Driver to use a hand sanitiser gel immediately after leaving the premises in view of the patient to provide reassurance. The recipient should not touch the e-POD device, clipboard, pen etc.
- On returning to the delivery vehicle the driver will complete POD on behalf of the recipient according to their organisation’s instruction including the words “COVID-19”. The same protocol will apply to any checklists or other documentation normally completed in the patient home. If documents cannot be reliably completed from driver’s memory on return to the delivery vehicle, and the information is considered essential for patient safety, alternative procedures should be implemented to capture information normally gathered during across threshold deliveries.

If the patient or driver has any safety concerns regarding the delivery or is unable to complete the delivery, then the driver will contact their customer service team for guidance.

Homecare Providers are continuing, wherever possible, to provide homecare services to patients where they or someone in the household has tested positive for Coronavirus (COVID-19) or is showing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19. Guidance is being developed for delivering homecare services where there is heightened risk of Coronavirus (COVID-19) ensuring these services are pre-arranged with homecare provider customer services and are delivered by staff trained in infection prevention and the appropriate use of personal protective equipment.

History

Version Status	Date	Reason for change	Author(s)
v12	12 Mar 20	New	B Duggan, C McCall
V1.3	17 Mar 20	Add “showing symptoms” criteria. Update questions in Doorstep Delivery protocol to match Observed Delivery Protocol.	C McCall

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