

When writing prescriptions for **non-urgent** End Of Life (EOL) care, GPs should, where possible, send prescriptions to the patient's usual pharmacy, because that pharmacy will hold a record of the patient's medication and are more likely to have appropriate medication in stock, if they are aware of an ongoing need. If a prescription is not urgent make sure carers are aware of this and that it can be left with the patient's usual pharmacy to be ordered.

Most community pharmacies have twice daily deliveries Monday to Friday (and if they are open on a Saturday, then a Saturday morning delivery). Depending on opening hours any medication ordered on a Saturday will usually arrive on a Monday morning and any medication ordered on a Sunday will usually arrive on a Monday afternoon.

If the medication prescribed is **required urgently**, the prescriber should contact the patient's usual pharmacy to notify them that an urgent prescription has been issued to allow the pharmacy to find the prescription on the spine and determine if all items are in stock. Alternatively the [Palliative Care Service](#) is designed to support the URGENT supply of palliative care drugs i.e. where the patient's usual pharmacy does not hold the required stock and medication is needed before the next scheduled order delivery to the community pharmacy. The Prescriber can check the [NHS Service Finder](#) for the most up to date list of pharmacies providing the Palliative Care Service.

Please see below **Palliative Care - Tips for Prescribers**:

- Try to plan your day so that you see patients who are likely to need a large increase in their medication as early as possible in the day.
- Prescribers can call the patient's usual pharmacy to check if they have medication available and that there are no supply issues with the medication before writing the prescription.
- Write one item per prescription. This means that, if necessary, items can be obtained from a variety of pharmacies rather than having to find one pharmacy with all the items in stock. Also consider writing two prescriptions for the same item if large quantities of a particular drug are required urgently.
- For each prescription item try to indicate the use over 24 hours as this may allow the community pharmacy to meet the initial need with the medication they have in stock and order in further supplies to fill the rest of the order.
- When writing prescriptions order enough medication to cover weekends and Bank Holidays but try and ensure these prescriptions are with the pharmacy by Friday so they can order the medication.
- Ensure that all Controlled Drugs (CD) prescription writing requirements are met. Prescriptions for Schedule 2 and 3 CDs must contain: the dose, the form, the strength and the total quantity required. The total quantity must also be written in WORDS and FIGURES.
- Make sure that the contact number on the FP10 prescription is the most appropriate phone number to contact you on if there are any problems with the prescription. Consider handwriting a more appropriate number on the prescription if necessary.