

Waiting customers should be informed if there is a delay on a prescription. Please ask if you have not been informed about a delay.

Do prescription charges apply to hospital outpatients?

All patients treated under the NHS must pay prescription charges unless they are exempt. Details of exemptions are given on the back of the prescription.

Patients who pay prescription charges and receive regular prescriptions with multiple items may find it costs less to purchase a Pre-Payment Certificate. Pharmacy staff can give advice.

How much medication will I be given?

The local PCT has agreed the length of medicine supply that should be given to outpatients and on discharge from the hospital. Bedford Hospital fully complies with the guidance.

Excessive supply can result in increased risk of error and waste if your treatment changes.



Can medicines or other chemist products be purchased from the hospital pharmacy?

At present the hospital pharmacy is unable to sell medicines.

Pharmacy staff

Pharmacy services are provided by a team of specially trained staff, including:

Pharmacy Assistants

Pharmacy assistants are locally trained workers who provide essential support, supply and reception activities.

Pharmacy Technicians

Pharmacy technicians are qualified staff who provide core specialist services and directly support pharmacists in their roles.

Pharmacists

Pharmacists are qualified experts in use of medicines. All pharmacists are trained to degree level and above. Most of our Clinical Pharmacists who work at ward level have post graduate qualifications.

For inpatient medication supply, portering services are also an essential part of our team.

If you have any questions about medicines here or at home, or are unsure about your treatment, please ask the pharmacy or ward staff.

We would also welcome and appreciate your comments on our services.

For further information, please contact the pharmacy department on 01234 792173

If you require this leaflet in an alternative format please contact our Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) on: 01234 795814

Patient Information Leaflet Pharmacy Services and Pharmaceutical Care



This leaflet contains information on the services provided by Bedford Hospital's pharmacy.

Helping you use medicine safely and effectively

Our pharmacy dispensary supplies medication to outpatients, inpatients and community clinics within the Bedford area.

The pharmacy holds more than 5,000 products and orders approximately 125 items each day. In total we spend £5 million on medicines every year.

Our department makes full use of computer systems and we even have a dispensing robot.

We hold electronic records of individual patient treatments electronic prescribing is now being used in some areas of the hospital.

The department also undertakes aseptic preparation of injections. This is the technical name for making sterile medicines ready for use and is carried out in a special clean room. This ensures bacteria do not contaminate the medicines such as intravenous infusions of anti-cancer drugs and intravenous nutrition.

Our Service

We aim to provide a prompt and efficient service to all our customers and do our best to keep delays to a minimum.

Above all, patient safety is our priority, so all our dispensing is checked thoroughly to ensure the correct medication, dose and information is provided.

Generally your prescription will be completed in arrival sequence. Dispensing may take a few minutes so please take a seat in our waiting area, or if you prefer, you can return at a later time.

Some prescriptions take longer to prepare due to their complexity or when the doctor needs to be contacted. Prescriptions may also take longer when urgent requests for medicines advice are taken in the dispensary.

When there is an extra delay we will keep you informed to reduce any inconvenience.

We aim to discuss the correct use of medications with all patients and also provide expert advice when required.

Inpatient services

Patients on our wards are visited by pharmacy staff every day. Our team check treatment charts, clarify prescriptions, report drug interactions and discuss doses with doctors to ensure prescribed drugs are effective and safe.

These visits provide the opportunity to solve medication issues on the wards and ensure patients get the treatment they need.

Medicines Information Service

This service is used by all hospital staff and is available to general practitioners working in the community. We also advise patients on medication supplied by the hospital.



Pharmacy staff are also involved in the production of drug treatment guidelines, working with medical and nursing staff to ensure patients receive the most appropriate treatments delivered safely to them.

Frequently asked questions

Can hospital prescriptions be taken to a local chemist?

Unfortunately no. White hospital prescription forms must be brought to the hospital pharmacy. Only green FP10 prescriptions can be taken to a community pharmacy (local chemist). These can be completed by the hospital pharmacy if patients prefer.

Can GP prescriptions (FP10s) be dispensed at the pharmacy?

Hospitals are unable to dispense GP prescriptions. You will need to take them to a community pharmacy contracted by the Primary Care Trust (PCT) to provide dispensing services.

Why do some outpatient prescriptions take longer to prepare?

Each prescription received is picked up in strict rotation. Some have more items to dispense than others or may need to be clarified with the prescriber.

While a prescription may seem simple we operate a standard checking procedure for all items to minimise any risk of error and ensure your safety and best use of your medicine.

Why has another patient received their medicines before me?

Although prescriptions are generally completed in order of arrival, medicines may not always be given out in this order. This is because some patients are calling back for previously ordered items or some prescriptions need to be checked with the doctor.