



Medication Management Summary Report



November 2019

Introduction

Healthwatch Leicester and Healthwatch Leicestershire are the local independent voice of the public in the delivery of health and social care in Leicester and Leicestershire. Healthwatch Leicester and Healthwatch Leicestershire collect feedback from members of the public about their experiences of using health and social care services. One of the ways that feedback is collected is through carrying out service evaluations and the findings are shared with service commissioners and service providers in order to influence service improvements.

On this occasion a project was undertaken that looked at the experiences of people who had been prescribed medication from a hospital that then required a repeat prescription from their GP practice.

Methodology

This project used a survey to engage with respondents who had experienced transfer of care from secondary care to primary care in relation to ongoing prescriptions for medication. The respondents were self-selecting and therefore, the results should be seen as being a snapshot of the views and experiences of the respondents.



Findings

There were 92 respondents to the survey in total. Not all of the respondents answered every question and therefore, the findings show the percentages of the respondents who answered each question.

General findings

Where were respondents treated.

Respondents were asked what hospital they had been treated at. **27%** said that they had been treated at Leicester General Hospital; **19%** said that they had been treated at Glenfield and **32%** said that they had been treated at Leicester Royal Infirmary. Those that answered Other (**22%**) gave a range of community hospitals across Leicestershire or hospitals that were outside Leicestershire including the Queens Medical Centre or Royal Derby Hospital.

The highest percentage of respondents (**57%**) had been treated as an outpatient; whilst **12%** said they had been seen in the emergency department.

Respondents were asked when they were treated at hospital. **72%** of respondents that said they had been treated in the last 12 months with **34%** having been treated within the last three months.

Prescriptions from the hospital

Respondents were asked if they were prescribed medication by the hospital when they were discharged from hospital. Three quarters of the respondents said that they were prescribed medication by the hospital.

Those that were prescribed medication were asked how long they were prescribed medication for on their discharge from hospital. **26%** said that they had been given medication for less than 7 days and **28%** said that they had been given medication for 30 days or more.

For those that were given medication from the hospital **81%** said that they had then needed to get a repeat prescription from their GP for more medication.

Repeat prescriptions

Analysis found that **67%** of those who had been given medication for 7 days or less from the hospital had then needed to get a repeat prescription and **88%** of those that had been given a prescription for 7-14 days from the hospital had needed to get a repeat prescription.

39% of respondents who needed a repeat prescription said that they had needed to see a doctor in order to get it. They were then asked how easy it had been for them to get an appointment to see a doctor, **40%** said that it has been very easy or easy to get an appointment and **37%** said that it had been difficult or very difficult.

Those that said that they needed a repeat prescription were asked how easy it had been for them to obtain that prescription. **69%** said that it had been either very easy or easy to obtain a repeat prescription. **12%** said that it had been either difficult or very difficult.

90% of the respondents who had been prescribed medication by the hospital said that their GP had been able to prescribe the same medication when they needed a repeat prescription. Those who said that their doctor had not been able to prescribe were asked what the reason was that they were not prescribed the same medication. Respondents gave a range of reasons including delayed or missing letters from secondary care as well as the perception that the costs of medication had impacted on whether they had been able to easily obtain their repeat prescription.

Findings by hospital

Leicester General Hospital

83% of respondents were prescribed medication by Leicester General Hospital. **35%** of respondents said that their medication was prescribed for a period of less than seven days and **35%** said that it was prescribed for between 14 and 30 days.

All of the respondents who had needed a repeat prescription who had been treated at Leicester General Infirmary said that their doctor had been able to prescribe the same medication as that the hospital had prescribed.

Leicester Glenfield Hospital

65% of respondents who were treated at Glenfield Hospital said that they were prescribed medication by the hospital and **36%** of these were provided with 7-14 days of medication.

73% of respondents who were prescribed medication at Glenfield Hospital needed to have a repeat prescription from their doctor following their discharge from hospital.

Of those that needed a repeat prescription **73%** said that their GP had been able to prescribe the same medication as the hospital but **27%** said that their GP had not been able to.

Leicester Royal Infirmary

68% of the respondents who were treated at Leicester Royal Infirmary said that they had been prescribed medication by the hospital. **32%** of those respondents said that they had been prescribed medication for seven days or less. Another **32%** said that they had been given medication to last more than 30 days.

84% of respondents who were treated at Leicester Royal Infirmary said that they had needed to obtain a repeat prescription from their GP.

94% said that their doctor had been able to prescribe the same medication as they were prescribed by the hospital when they had a repeat prescription.

Other hospitals

79% of respondents who had used 'other' hospitals said that they had been prescribed medication by the hospital. **40%** of those that had been prescribed medication had been given a prescription for over 30 days.

Despite the percentage of respondents who had been given prescriptions of over 30 days, **87%** of the respondents who had been prescribed medication had needed to obtain a repeat prescription.

75% of those that had needed to get a repeat prescription who had initially been treated at an 'another' hospital said that it had been very easy or easy to obtain a repeat prescription when they needed one. However, **17%** said that it had been very difficult.

Findings by hospital

The location that respondents reside in had an impact on where they were treated in some small ways. For example, **50%** of respondents from Blaby said that they had been treated at Glenfield Hospital which is higher percentage than for respondents from other areas.

Respondents from all areas were more likely to say that they had been prescribed medication by the hospital than not, and for Harborough this was all respondents.

When asked how long they had been prescribed medication for from the hospital no respondents from Harborough; Melton or Oadby and Wigston said that they had has a prescription for less than seven days.

There were higher percentages of respondents who needed a repeat prescription than those that did not across all areas.

There were a broad range of answers to how easy it was to get an appointment to see their doctor to obtain a repeat prescription. All respondents from Harborough who answered the question said that it was very difficult to get an appointment and this was the same for Oadby and Wigston.

Whilst issues with being able to book appointments with doctors are not the key focus of this project it is possible to see that difficulties with accessing appointments can have a negative impact on being able to obtain a repeat prescription.

There were higher percentages of respondents Oadby and Wigston and Blaby who said that it was very easy to obtain a repeat prescription than in other areas. Only respondents in Blaby or Charnwood said that it had been very difficult to obtain a repeat prescription. The highest percentage of respondents who had found it difficult to obtain a repeat prescription were from Oadby and Wigston.

Conclusions

This project was started due to concerns about the handover of care from secondary care to primary care in relation to medication and the need for repeat prescriptions. The survey was designed to understand how easily respondents who had been prescribed medication in a hospital setting had then able to access further medication when they needed it.

A large percentage of the respondents said that they had been prescribed medication by the hospital when they had been treated there and had subsequently needed to have a repeat prescription through their GP practice. However, the highest percentage had said that to obtain their prescription they had not needed to see their GP and they had been able to get their prescription.

Some had needed to see their GP and in some circumstances there had been issues with being able to get an appointment in enough time at the end of the medication that they had been given by the hospital. Having prescriptions of less than seven days from the hospital could be seen as creating potential issues for patients who need to have a repeat prescription and require an appointment with their GP to do so.

There were few instances where there had been issues for respondents in being able to get a repeat prescription and these included instances where letters from secondary care providers to their GP practice had been lost or delayed which had impacted on how easily they had been able to get their repeat prescription. Others said that there had been occasions where the dosage had been changed by their GP and this could cause some anxiety for the patients. There were also some reported issues around GPs prescribing the same medication and it was perceived by patients that this was due to the cost of the medication that had been prescribed by the hospital practitioner.

There was little difference between particular hospitals or the experiences of respondents depending upon the areas that they resided in.



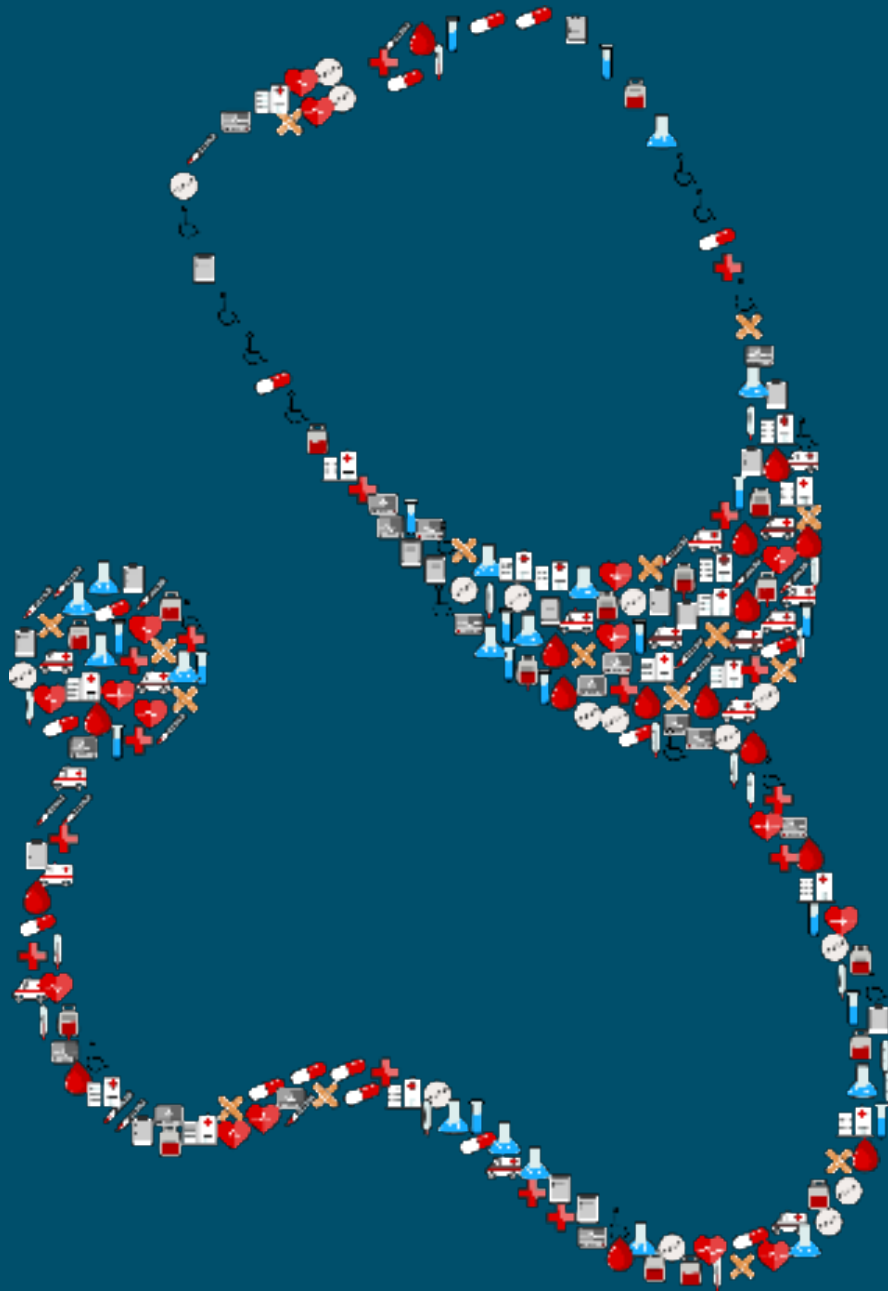
Despite there being some issues raised across the whole number of respondents overall, the experiences of most of the respondents were largely positive and not suggestive of any particularly serious issues with the transfer of care between secondary care and primary care in relation to ongoing prescriptions for medication.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the report findings.

- » **Communication between hospital and GP:** There were some respondents who told of letters from the hospital to their GP being lost or late and this had impacted upon the ease with which they were able to obtain a repeat prescription when they needed one. It is recommended that methods of ensuring that letters are delivered in a timely fashion between the hospital and GP such as using electronic communication to speed up delivery.
- » **Longer supply of medication to reduce need for medication:** As most respondents said that they had needed to obtain a repeat prescription for the medication that the hospital had initially prescribed, it is recommended that consideration be given to prescribing for longer periods by the hospitals. Whilst this would not remove the need for repeat prescriptions altogether being able to reduce the numbers of patient requiring a repeat prescription within a couple of weeks of their initial prescription could reduce the pressure on GP appointments.





Healthwatch Leicester and Leicestershire
Clarence House
46 Humberstone Gate
Leicester
LE1 3PJ

www.healthwatchll.com
t: 0116 2518313
enquiries@healthwatchll.com
tw: @HealthwatchLeic