

Controlled drugs/benzodiazepine prescribing patient treatment agreement

Document history:

Version	Date	Main Changes/Comments
1	December 2021	Adapted from the original controlled drugs/benzodiazepine prescribing patient treatment agreement document agreed by East Kent Prescribing Group in 2020. Addition of points 7&8 following comments received from Specialists at DVH, EKUFT & KCHFT. Amendment made to ground rule 1 to include designated prescriber and addition of nominated pharmacy. Link to Gov website regarding drugs and driving updated.
1.1	March 2022	Wording change from GP/Doctor to Clinician throughout the document following comments received at JPC in March 2022

Controlled Drugs / Benzodiazepine prescribing

Patient Treatment Agreement

Why do I need to sign an agreement?

- We now understand opioid drugs make only little or no difference to long term pain and if so, only at low, intermittent doses.
- Opioid, Gabapentinoid and Benzodiazepine prescribing is controlled because of their addictive potential, so good communication is required when prescribing them.
- This agreement will enable trust and clarity from the outset.

Ground rules:

1. Your designated clinician will see you by appointment and it is your responsibility to turn up at the right time. If you miss your appointment, you will not be issued with a prescription. You should also obtain your prescriptions through one regular pharmacy.
2. You must not use emergency appointments or house calls or attempt to see any other clinician at the surgery to discuss issues relating to your drug treatment or prescription. Any attempt to obtain extra drugs from any other clinician will immediately cause a review of your treatment and possible loss of your prescription.
3. Verbal abuse/annoyance to receptionists or other patients in the waiting room will not be tolerated. If you are aggressive to anyone whilst attending the surgery, you will be asked to leave and could be banned permanently.
4. The aims of prescribing would be to use minimal, safe amounts of any treatment to levels that allow maximum function / quality of life. This is especially true with controlled drugs / benzodiazepines. If, in the opinion of your clinician, you are not achieving this, there will be a review of your treatment and options discussed. Minimum does not necessarily mean zero.
5. Your prescription and/or medication is your responsibility; if it is lost or stolen it will not be replaced. New prescriptions will normally be issued on a weekly / fortnightly basis.

6. If you wish to go on holiday, you will need to give at least 2 weeks' notice so that your prescription can be prepared. (Restrictions apply to taking controlled drugs out of the UK).
7. If you have been prescribed a strong opioid for longer than two weeks it is not recommended to stop abruptly, the total daily opioid dose should be reduced gradually.^[1] When reducing opioids, together with your designated prescriber, you should work to establish deadlines for when dose reductions should be achieved by. A reduction plan will clearly state the interval for reduction. There may occasionally be a need to pause the reduction, there will be a maximum number of times that this can occur which will be outlined by your designated prescriber.
8. A small proportion of people, may obtain good pain relief that increases their function with opioids in the long term if: the dose can be kept low, use is intermittent and providing the dose is metabolically safe for the patient. However, it is difficult to identify these patients at the start of treatment.^{[1][2]}

[1] Reducing opioid prescribing in chronic pain. PresQIPP Bulletin 2.2. February 2019

[2] Opioids Aware. Faculty of Pain Medicine of the Royal College of Anaesthetists

WARNING

As controlled drugs/benzodiazepines may cause drowsiness, we strongly advise against operating dangerous machinery. It is your responsibility to contact the DVLA to advise them of your drug use or look at their website <https://www.gov.uk/drug-driving-law>

We strongly advise you to avoid taking over the counter products without seeking advice first from your regular Pharmacist. Also avoid alcohol while you are on the scheme, as the risk of overdose is increased by mixing drugs.

All take home doses should be stored carefully, well out of the reach of children.

It is a criminal offence to alter a prescription, even if there is an error on the prescription.

What you will do:

- Observe the Service Ground Rules at all times while engaging with your GP, GP practice staff, community pharmacist, pharmacy staff or other professionals involved in your treatment.
- Attend all appointments by yourself unless you have prior agreement from your clinician for somebody else to attend with you. You should attend all appointments at the stated time and inform your GP practice, in advance, of any need to cancel or re-arrange appointments. Missed appointments may lead to suspension of your script resulting in no medication.
- Take active part in your treatment plan and inform your clinician if there are any changes in your circumstances which may affect your ability to abide by this agreement.

I hereby consent to treatment with my clinician and agree to abide with the service ground rules. I understand the standards of behaviour required and the potential hazards of prescribed Controlled drugs/Benzodiazepines.

Patient's name _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Clinician's name _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Designated Pharmacy: _____

Your prescription will not be dispensed if your behaviour causes any problems in the pharmacy. If you attend intoxicated, your medication will not be dispensed. Under these circumstances you will be referred back to your doctor.