

New Arrangement for Drug Dispensing Service



醫院管理局
HOSPITAL
AUTHORITY



Frequently Asked Questions

1 What is "New Arrangement for Drug Dispensing Service"?

To align with the Hospital Authority (HA)'s policy direction of reducing medication wastage, ensuring medication safety, and appropriate use of public healthcare resources, the HA has implemented the following new measures on drug dispensing **starting from 24 March 2025**:

Staged Medication Supply

All discharged patients, as well as patients attending Specialist and General Outpatient Clinics of the HA will be dispensed medications with a maximum of 24 weeks. If a patient is prescribed with medications for more than 24 weeks, arrangement will be made for the patient to collect the medications through medication refills.

Adjustment in Prescribing "As Needed" Medications

If a patient is prescribed with "As Needed" medications for more than 28 days and the doctor does not specify the total quantity, the prescription quantity will be set at 25%. Doctor will adjust the prescribing quantity based on the patient's clinical needs if required.

Please contact Pharmacy if there are any questions regarding this new arrangement.



Maximum
medication
dispensing
duration

24
Weeks

2 Why is "New Arrangement for Drug Dispensing Service" being implemented in the HA?

Some patients have long follow-up periods, which can result in receiving medications for over six months or even a year. During this period, the drug regimen may be changed following doctor's consultation or hospital admission and the "As Needed" medications may also be overstocked after patients' conditions have improved. These situations can make it difficult for patients to manage their medications at home especially when there are leftover medications, and could increase the risk of improper use of medications and the likelihood of medication wastage.

With the implementation of medication refills, along with the new arrangement of drug supply for "As Needed" medications, the risk of improper use of medications and medication wastage due to the accumulation of excess medications at home would be reduced.

3 How to collect medications under "New Arrangement for Drug Dispensing Service"?

If a patient is prescribed with medications for more than 24 weeks, he or she must settle the drug charges for the whole duration according to the current Fees and Charges mechanism, then submit the prescription to the Pharmacy and obtain a ticket number. Pharmacy staff will dispense each medication for a period of 24 weeks and provide the patient with refill coupon(s) for refilling the remaining medications on a later date. If the patient is also prescribed with "As Needed" medications for more than 28 days and the doctor does not specify the total quantity, the dispensing quantity will be set at 25% according to the prescription.

The date for collecting the medication refill will be specified on the refill coupon. The patient can bring the refill coupon to the designated Pharmacy on the specified refill date (or according to the instructions of the designated Pharmacy) and wait for medications to be dispensed and ready for collection, without the need to settle the drug charges again. If the refill coupon is presented to Pharmacy after the specified refill date, the Pharmacy will assess the situation and dispense the medications accordingly.

For example, if a patient is prescribed with five long-term medications (for a period of 48 weeks), the patient will initially receive 24 weeks' supply of each medication. The patient can then refill the remaining medications once on the specified refill date (or according to the instructions of the designated Pharmacy).

4 Are there any medications that are not included in "New Arrangement for Drug Dispensing Service"?

Please enquire with Pharmacy staff when submitting the prescription. Pharmacy staff will handle the issue according to patient's situation and relevant hospital policy.

5 Are there any additional charges for "Staged Medication Supply"?

No. Patients simply need to pay the full drug charges upfront according to the current Fees and Charges mechanism before submitting their prescriptions to the Pharmacy. There are no additional charges for refilling medications.

6 Can the refill coupon be used to refill medications at any HA institutions?

Patients can only refill their medications at the designated Pharmacy as specified on the refill coupons. Please take note of the service hours of the designated Pharmacy.

7 Can a family member, relative, or friend collect the medication refills on behalf of the patient?

Yes. The patient's authorised representative can submit the refill coupon at the designated Pharmacy as specified on the refill coupon for medication refills. When collecting the medications, the authorised representative needs to present the patient's identification document for verification of the patient's identity.

8 What to do if the refill coupon is not available or has been lost?

If the patient forgets to bring or loses the refill coupon, he or she should bring an identification document and enquire at the Pharmacy which issued the refill coupon.

9 Do patients need to collect their medication refills on a specific date?

The next medication refill date is specified on the refill coupon. Patients should bring the refill coupons to the designated Pharmacy on the specified refill date (or according to the instructions of the designated Pharmacy); submit to the Pharmacy then wait for medications to be dispensed and ready for collection. If the refill coupon is presented to the Pharmacy after the specified refill date, the Pharmacy will assess the situation and dispense the medications accordingly.

Patients are recommended to check their medication supply in advance and refill medications on time to avoid running out of medications.

If there are any questions regarding this new arrangement, please enquire with Pharmacy staff when submitting the prescription or collecting the medications. Pharmacy staff will handle the issue according to patient's situation and relevant hospital policy.



10 Will "New Arrangement for Drug Dispensing Service" affect the date of patient's follow-up appointment?

The "New Arrangement for Drug Dispensing Service" will not affect patient's follow-up appointment date.

11 If the patient had a doctor's consultation or was admitted to hospital before the next medication refill, will the refill coupon previously issued still be valid?

If the medications prescribed have been changed following a doctor's consultation or hospital stay, the patient can contact the designated Pharmacy as specified on the refill coupon to enquire whether the medications still require to be refilled.

