**Pharmaceutical Care of patients requiring treatment for Hepatitis C FAQ**

**Where can I find information on the community pharmacy service for hepatitis C?**

Information can be found at

<https://www.communitypharmacy.scot.nhs.uk/nhs-boards/nhs-lothian/hepatitis-c-treatment/>

**Which members of the pharmacy team need to know about the hepatitis C service specification?**

Any member of staff working in a pharmacy where this service isdelivered should be aware of the service, especially when there is a current patient attending the pharmacy.

**Are there any specific communication issues pharmacy staff should be aware of?**

Many patients feel a stigma around disclosure of hepatitis C. All staff must refrain from openly discussing ‘hepatitis c’ or drug names over the counter and in front of other staff/customers. Please ensure all staff are aware of the sensitivities around this issue.

**Where should the medicine be stored before dispensing?**

The medicine should be stored in a logical place in the dispensary where it can be located at the appropriate time for dispensing by ANY member of the dispensary team. A written record should also be kept using the stock balance log which is available on the website.

**Where should the medicine be stored once dispensed?**

The medicine should be stored where it can easily be located when the patient presents to collect it. All relevant staff, including counter and locum staff should be aware of where to find it

**When should I contact the specialist team?**

Please contact the specialist team if:

* + Patient does not attend to collect the medicine on the agreed days.
  + You have queries about adverse drug reactions
  + You have queries about pharmaceutical care

If the specialist pharmacist is not available, the clinical nurse practitioners can be contacted. Contact details can be found on the prescription, patient referral form and in the information pack.

**When should the pharmacy team order the medicines?**

Stock should be ordered on a monthly basis, up to 7-14 days before the agreed collection date. The community pharmacy does not need to wait for authorisation from the specialist service, assuming that there are no concerns about patient compliance.

**What happens if the patient misses a dose or does not complete treatment?**

Please contact the specialist team to advise of any missed doses. In general, for a small number of consecutive missed doses we would advise continuing and adding these doses onto end of treatment.

In order to optimise treatment success (ie obtain a cure from hepatitis C) it is best if the patient completes treatment for the prescribed course length. Failure to complete treatment could lead to the patient not clearing their virus and future treatment options may be difficult.

**What counselling does a patient need?**

Patients will receive a lot of information and counselling regarding their condition and treatment from the specialist nurses at clinic. The expectation from the community pharmacist is to re-emphasis key messages such as

* Importance of adherence
* Advice on missed doses
* Advice on common side effects

**How do I get paid the service fee?**

The specialist hepatitis pharmacy team submits a request for payment of this fee to PCCT on monthly basis therefore the community pharmacist does not have to submit any paperwork regarding this

**How do I apply for advanced payment?**

The process for advanced payment can be found in the information regarding the service, available at:

<https://www.communitypharmacy.scot.nhs.uk/nhs-boards/nhs-lothian/hepatitis-c-treatment/>

**How much medicine should I dispense to a patient?**

Dispensing arrangements will be assessed for each patient on an individual basis and the community pharmacists input will be sought where appropriate. The specialist team will discuss this aspect of care before treatment starts. Some patients may have 1 month dispensed in total, whilst some others may require some extra support and receive their meds on a daily or weekly basis. Note, the different medicines may have some different requirements in terms of storage outwith original pack therefore care should be taken and remaining stock stored in original container where possible.