



Medicines Waste



NHS Dorset has launched a public awareness campaign highlighting the impact of Medicines Waste and is asking patients to check what medicines they have at home before ordering more.

Why is this important? In Dorset £9 million a month is spent on repeat medications but approximately 1.6 million medicine items are wasted unnecessarily in Dorset each year. Your help is needed to reduce this.

It's important to realise that if you have enough medicine at home, there's no need to order more every time. You will still be able to request your medicine again in the future.

Stay well

- Unused medicines go out of date and might not work as intended, meaning your care might be compromised.
- Stockpiling medicines worsen drug shortages.

Stay safe

- Stockpiles of medicines kept at home can be dangerous for children and pets.
- Medicines are only prescribed for you and it is not safe to share prescribed medicines with anyone else.

Stay green

When you dispose of medicines properly, by handing them in to your pharmacy, you are helping to make sure that waste medicines do not pollute our rivers and seas.

Only ordering what you need means that you are helping the environment, because once medicines have left the pharmacy they cannot be recycled or used by anyone else. If you are on automatic repeat prescriptions and there is an item you don't need one month, hand it back before you leave the pharmacy.

The good news is that you can help make a tremendous difference – please speak to your pharmacy team about only ordering what you need.

For more information –

www.nhsdorset.nhs.uk/yourmeds

The Menopause Support Group

This local group holds meetings which are free, friendly and informal, encouraging women to offer support and be supported by others, who have an understanding and empathy for their situation.

Information and guidance is available on the many different ways to manage menopausal symptoms, including diet, stress, sleep, lifestyle, hormone replacement therapy, alternative and herbal therapies, and more knowledge can be gained from the many up to date factsheets available to take home.

The opportunity to learn about the different stages of menopause and how hormones affect the function of the female body and brain, and suggestions on how to maintain good health and wellbeing from perimenopause and into the post-menopausal years.

Questions are welcomed on all aspects of menopause for individual issues or queries regarding a particular area of concern.

For more information -

www.dorsetmenopausesupport.co.uk

Sharing information from health & care records

Each time you use an NHS or social care service information about your health, care and treatment is recorded.

Health and care services share this information with each other to provide you with care and treatment. Data from your records (which you cannot be identified from) may also be shared with other health and care services or approved organisations to help plan and improve services or develop new medicines or treatments.

We know that people can be concerned about how their information is stored and shared and NHS and social care services take respecting your privacy and keeping your information and data safe and secure very seriously. Strict rules and processes are followed to protect your information and data, which is shared using secure IT systems which follow industry security standards and are kept-up-to date against the latest cybersecurity threats.

To find out more about how health and care services share your information and the steps taken to keep it confidential, safe and secure visit [these web pages](#).

How Pharmacies can help

Pharmacists can give you advice on a range of conditions and suggest medicines you can buy that can help.

They may also be able to offer treatment for some conditions, without you needing to contact the Practice:

- earache
- impetigo
- infected insect bites
- shingles
- sinusitis
- sore throat
- urinary tract infections (UTIs)

If you go to a pharmacy with one of these conditions, the pharmacist will offer you advice, treatment or refer you to a GP or other healthcare professional.

They will then update your GP health record.

This short video explains more -

<https://youtu.be/ldmaxo7Ez-w?feature=shared>

Mental Health Support for Veterans

The NHS is rolling out an expanded mental health support service for Armed Forces veterans, following a survey which found that more than half find it difficult to speak up about mental health issues.

A new campaign has just been launched to highlight its Op COURAGE service, which now includes enhanced specialist support for addictions.

Latest available data shows that from April-November 2023, more than 4,500 referrals were made to the NHS service which provides specialist care, support and treatment to former Armed Forces personnel, reservists, and service leavers with mental health and wellbeing issues.

More than 30,000 referrals have been made to the veterans' mental health and wellbeing 'lifeline' service since it was launched by the NHS in 2017.

There are about 2.4 million veterans living in the UK and a new survey of over 3,000 veterans and serving personal, carried out by NHS England, found that the majority (around 60%), of those who took part, said they found it difficult to ask for help for mental health issues.

For those who sought help from Op COURAGE, self-referral was the top method (around 44%) and more than half (52%) said they currently had, or had previously had, a mental health problem and 54% said they had a physical health problem now or had previously had one.

As a result, NHS England redesigned the service, with a focus on boosting self-referrals, as well as the addition of enhanced addiction support.

Support for veterans, reservists and service leavers through OP COURAGE is provided by trained professionals from the Armed Forces community. For more information – [Op COURAGE](#)

Have you used a Digital Health Tool, or App?

This could be the Digital Health App Library or Video Library, ACR self-test for kidney disease, Viso BP@Home, and digital apps like myDiabetes, myCOPD and myAsthma.

NHS Dorset would like to hear your stories and experiences so that they can continue to support and inspire others to adopt these life-changing tools. Either fill in the survey here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/QM7nABKPWU>

Or email: Ourdorsetdigital@nhsdorset.nhs.uk