Helen Sweeney

All Prescribers Deputy Director of Medicines and MACE

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Dear Prescribing Colleagues,

Firstly I’d like to thank you for all the hard work you are all putting to ensure the continued care of our service users. During this period of uncertainty I appreciate that everyone is trying to minimise exposing patients and carers to unnecessary contact. In order to do this it may be tempting to increase the duration of supply for community based patients who you professionally judge to be stable on their existing medication, however I urge to you not to do this. We have all witnessed the crushing impact of recent stockpiling on the supermarkets supply chain; we must support the medicines supply chain to ensure that all patients have access to medicines throughout this period.

To support the ongoing management of medicines supply and shortages, NHS England and NHS Improvement have been working closely with the Department of Health and Social Care to facilitate the safe and effective distribution of medicines across the health economy and will be closely monitoring prescribing trends to ensure that all health providers are working together in the best interests of all patients.

At this time:

* I ask that prescriptions continue to be issued for the standard 28 day duration for outpatient prescriptions
* Prescribers may wish to provide vulnerable patients with an additional post-dated prescription that family/friends may collect on their behalf

Thank you in advance for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Helen Sweeney

**Deputy Director of Medicines and MACE**