**GP newsletter**

**Cutting carbon with greener inhalers**

Suitable patients will soon be able to work with their healthcare professional to discuss swapping to a ‘greener’ inhaler which could significantly reduce their carbon footprint.

The NHS is promoting the use of dry powder inhalers (DPI) instead of metered dose inhalers (MDIs) for conditions such as asthma and COPD. This is because many people will be able to achieve the same benefit from using a DPI, which is better for the environment as it does not use greenhouse gases to propel the medication into the lungs.

Patients will be invited to discuss their inhaler at their next routine respiratory review and work alongside their healthcare professional to make the right choice for them.

If a patient opts to change their device, their practice should inform their local community pharmacy so that they can use the nationally-commissioned [New Medicines Service (NMS)](https://psnc.org.uk/services-commissioning/advanced-services/nms/) to follow up patients and reduce the workload for GP practices.

Under the NMS, the pharmacy can provide structured support to patients who have changed their inhaler, with their consent. This happens in three stages:

Step 1: The pharmacist will provide the patient with initial information on the new inhaler, including how to use and maintain it.

Step 2: The pharmacist will arrange a face-to-face or telephone follow-up seven to 14 days later to check if the patient needs any additional support or information.

Step 3: A further follow-up will be arranged 14 to 21 days after step two, to again check all is well and whether more information is needed.

The pharmacist will use their professional judgement to resolve any issues, and will liaise with the practice about any concerns or things they cannot deal with themselves.

Dispensing practices will provide appropriate support for their dispensing patients. Practices are being encouraged to consider referring other patients to their usual pharmacy for NMS support for an inhaler change, and should discuss the best referral process with their pharmacies as soon as possible.

Patient information about the [NMS is available here](https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions-and-pharmacies/pharmacies/new-medicine-service-nms/), while a leaflet which aims to help them get the best from their green inhaler can be found [at this link](https://psnc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/NMS-pt-leaflet-not-present-in-the-pharmacy-Aug-2021.pdf).

A range of other resources, including posters, patient leaflets and Q&As are also attached to this bulletin.

**Ends**