

## Volunteer Protocol for Medication Collection and Delivery

*(as per HSE regulations)*

During the current public health emergency, there will be a greatly increased need for medicines to be delivered to patients, particularly the more vulnerable members of our communities. While some pharmacies routinely provide delivery services, it is a new development for volunteers to be involved with Covid-19 delivery services.

### Role of Volunteers

The assistance of volunteers in delivering essential services to vulnerable older people is a hugely important part of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This assistance is vitally important in ensuring vulnerable older people can continue to access their medicines.

- Delivering medicines places particular responsibilities on volunteers, including the need to: maintain patient confidentiality,
- Adhere to public health guidance, and
- Maintain the security and safety of the medicines (for example, ensuring that medicines needing refrigeration are out of the fridge for as short a time as possible).

### In advance of carrying out the task

In advance of any medication collection or delivery, you will be contacted by a supervisor/ALONE staff contact and given some important details for carrying out your task. These are:

1. Remember at all times to follow the HSE advice on hand hygiene, coughing etiquette and social distancing
2. The supervising pharmacist has overall responsibility to ensure appropriate procedures are in place to ensure the safe supply and delivery of medicines
3. Name, phone number, address and Eircode of the older person
4. The pharmacist will be in contact with the older person to ensure that the patient or their carer has the information they need for the proper use, storage and disposal of the medicines concerned. Volunteers will not be expected to give this type of information as part of the delivery service – where a patient has a query, they should contact the pharmacy directly
5. Pharmacy contact details and location for pick up
6. How payment for items is to be handled, i.e.: if the older person will pay in cash or over the phone. If the older person cannot pay, you will be given instructions on paying for this yourself and how to receive the money from ALONE afterwards
7. Name, email and contact number of supervisor/ALONE staff member

You will be provided with these details via email or text. If you feel you need any more information before carrying out your task, please check with your supervisor/ALONE staff contact

If you feel unwell in any way, please do not volunteer. Let your supervisor/ALONE staff contact know as soon as possible that you are unwell and follow all guidance from the HSE in relation to self-isolation.

### **Collection of Prescription Package**

When you arrive at the pharmacy to collect the medication you must follow the below steps:

1. A confidentiality agreement should be signed between the pharmacist and the volunteer (this will be provided by the pharmacist)
2. Collect the correct medication - The medicines will be placed in a sealed bag labelled with the patient name and address and this bag should ideally be placed in a larger bag, for example, a carrier bag labelled with patient's name, address, Eircode and contact phone number
3. Medicines should be delivered immediately to the patient once collected. If the volunteer is making several deliveries, they will be given guidance by the pharmacist to prioritise those deliveries containing medicines that need refrigeration

### **Payment for the Prescription Package**

There are three different payment options. You will be told which option the older person has chosen in advance of carrying out your task. Note that all older people are encouraged to use contactless methods of payment where possible and to only use cash where absolutely necessary.

#### **Option 1: The older person has paid the store in advance for their items**

1. Upon arrival at the pharmacy, follow hand cleaning and social distancing measures as outlined by the HSE
2. Introduce yourself to a member of staff and explain that you are there to collect the medicine for the person's name
3. Take a picture of the receipt on your mobile phone and send to your supervisor/ALONE staff contact.

#### **Option 2: You need to collect cash from the older person to pay for the items**

1. If you have been instructed by your supervisor/ALONE staff contact to collect cash from the older person, please ring the older person first and ask when it suits them for you to pick up the cash.
2. The older person will have the cash ready in an envelope for you when you arrive.
3. Follow any property locations instructions provided to you by your supervisor/ALONE staff contact
4. Ring the doorbell or knock on the door. Remember to practice social distancing, keeping a space of 2 metres between you and the older person.

5. Introduce yourself and hold up your ALONE documentation, volunteer ID or personal ID details for the older person to see
6. The older person will then leave the envelope outside the door for you
7. Please do not enter the home even if invited and explain it is for their and your own safety
8. Leave the property

**Option 3: The older person is not in a position to pay so ALONE may ask you to pay for the goods temporarily**

In some circumstances, ALONE may ask volunteers to pay for items for older people themselves first. If this is the case, we will let you know how you can receive the money back from ALONE afterwards. We are encouraging all older people to only use cash where absolutely necessary so this will only happen in a small number of cases. If you are not in a position to pay for the items, please let your supervisor/ALONE staff contact know before carrying out your task.

1. Upon arrival at the shop, follow hand cleaning and social distancing measures as outlined by the HSE
2. Purchase the agreed prescribed medication on behalf of the older person
3. Take a picture of the receipt on your mobile phone and send to your supervisor/ALONE staff contact

**Delivering to the Older Person's Address**

Once you have collected the prescription package, the next step is to deliver it to the older person. Before delivering the medication please call the older person to let them know when you will arrive. When you arrive at the older person's address you should:

1. Follow any property location instructions provided to you by your supervisor/ALONE staff contact
2. Place the prescription package at the front door. Ring the doorbell or knock on the door. Remember to practice social distancing, keeping a space of 2 metres between you and the older person.
3. Please hold up your volunteer ID or personal ID for the older person to see.
4. Please do not enter the home even if invited and explain it is for their and your own safety. If they ask for help with something else, tell them you will let your supervisor know they need help and they will follow up directly with the older person.
5. Please let the older person know that the receipt and change, if any, is in the bag.
6. The older person should check the medicine delivery and confirm to the volunteer that they are the intended recipient.
7. Reassure them that you followed HSE guidelines in relation to hygiene.
8. Leave the property.

**In the eventuality of the door going unanswered and the volunteer being unable to make contact by phone, the medicine must be returned to the pharmacy without delay**

## Follow up with Staff Member

### The final part of your task is to follow up with your supervisor/ALONE staff contact

1. When you have completed the delivery please text or email your supervisor/ ALONE staff contact. Please contact them **as soon as possible** to let them know the delivery has been completed.
2. The volunteer will confirm safe delivery has been made by emailing the pharmacy/or texting to the pharmacy or confirming in another way as agreed with the pharmacy.
3. If you have a concern for the older person following the delivery please ring your supervisor/ALONE contact. Do not enter the house and provide assistance yourself.
4. If you paid for the items yourself and in need of a volunteer payment refund, please follow the instructions provided by your supervisor/ ALONE staff contact.
5. If you have any problems or issues while carrying out your task, please call your supervisor/ALONE staff contact immediately. Remember to never volunteer while you are feeling unwell and to follow HSE guidelines at all times.