

Guidance on the Medicines Use Review service

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1. Introduction

The Medicines Use Review (MUR) service was introduced in April 2005 as the first advanced service for community pharmacy. There have been several changes to the MUR service since 2005 with significant changes in October 2011 (the addition of target groups) and changes to the data capture requirements on 1 July 2012 and on 1 September 2012. All the changes are designed to help community pharmacy demonstrate the benefits of the service to commissioners and provide assurance that it is a high quality, value for money service that can yield positive health outcomes for patients.

This guidance is aimed at commissioners of community pharmacy, as well as pharmacy contractors and individual pharmacists who deliver the service.

According to Direction 4(2) of The [Pharmaceutical Services \(Advanced and Enhanced Services\) \(England\) Directions 2013](#)¹ (the 2013 Directions), the underlying purpose of the MUR service is:

“... with the patient’s agreement, to improve the patient’s knowledge and use of drugs by in particular:

- (a) establishing the patient’s actual use, understanding and experience of taking drugs;*
- (b) identifying, discussing and assisting in the resolution of poor or ineffective use of drugs by the patient;*
- (c) identifying side effects and drug interactions that may affect the patient’s compliance with instructions given to them by a health care professional for the taking of drugs; and*
- (d) improving clinical and cost effectiveness of drugs prescribed to patients, thereby reducing the wastage of such drugs.”*

Appendix 1 provides some helpful information on what an MUR is and what it is not.

Appendix 2 sets out the MUR service specification agreed by NHS Employers and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC). It is available on the [NHS Employers](#) and [PSNC](#) websites.

A list of suggested questions has been developed by an expert panel to help shape the discussion pharmacists have with patients during the MUR consultation. The questions are not compulsory, but pharmacists may find them useful to obtain the maximum amount of information from the patient’s perspective as is possible. The suggested questions can be found at Appendix 3.

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/193012/2013-03-12_-_Advanced_and_Enhanced_Directions_2013_e-sig.pdf

2. The regulatory framework

The 2013 Directions set out the regulatory framework for the provision of the MUR service. The 2013 Directions replace all earlier Directions setting out the requirements for pharmaceutical advanced and enhanced services. NHS England Area Teams (ATs) and pharmacy contractors should familiarise themselves with the 2013 Directions and any subsequent amendments.

The 2013 Directions place an obligation on NHS England (referred to as “NHSCB” – the NHS Commissioning Board – in the Directions) to make arrangements for the provision of MUR services with any pharmacy contractor who wishes (or is required) to enter into such arrangements (Direction 4(1)). However, pharmacy contractors must first meet certain conditions set out in section 3 below. Those contractors which secured inclusion in the pharmaceutical list through the control of entry exemptions (other than the distance selling pharmacies) may be required to provide the service by virtue of Regulation 66 of the 2013 Regulations² (Direction 4(1)). Such pharmacies are:

- out of town large retail area pharmacies
- 100-hour pharmacies
- pharmacies within a new one-stop primary care centre.

Where, in the 2013 Directions, NHS England is required to ‘make arrangements with’ a pharmacy contractor to provide one of the advanced services, there is no special requirement on NHS England to actually do anything before the services are provided. The pharmacy contractor must notify NHS England that it wishes to begin providing the service, and provide the copies of the MUR certificates required under Direction 4(4), then it may provide the service. Pharmacies that notified their PCTs prior to commencing the provision of the service before 1 April 2013, need not re-notify NHS England. Once the pharmacy has begun to provide the advanced service, NHS England will have an obligation to ensure that it is providing the service in compliance with the Directions and any approved particulars.

² The National Health Service (Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2013: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2013/349/made>

3. Conditions to be met by pharmacy contractors

3.1 Condition 1 – compliance with essential services and clinical governance

As with all advanced services, pharmacy contractors must be satisfactorily complying with the essential services set out in Part 2, Schedule 4 of the 2013 Regulations and the clinical governance system set out in paragraph 28, Part 4, Schedule 4 of the 2013 Regulations (Direction 4(3)). Where a pharmacy contractor is not meeting this requirement they will be unable to provide the service.

3.2 Condition 2 – requirement for MUR certificates

MURs can only be provided by registered pharmacists who have an MUR certificate, a copy of which has been sent by the pharmacy contractor to NHS England (or the Primary Care Trust before 1 April 2013) prior to entering into an arrangement to provide MURs (Direction 4(4)). Contractors will wish to ensure they are able to check that the registered pharmacist has an MUR certificate before employing or engaging them to provide MURs. ATs should ensure that they advise contractors who to send copies of the MUR certificates to.

The MUR certificate is defined within the 2013 Directions as:

“a statement of satisfactory performance certificate awarded or endorsed by a higher education institute being evidence that a person has satisfactorily completed an assessment relating to the competency framework for registered pharmacists providing MUR services approved by the NHSCB [NHS England] (or pending the first such approval by the NHSCB, by the Secretary of State”.

The PSNC has produced further information on the [accreditation requirements](#) for pharmacists.

Where a pharmacy contractor provides services from more than one set of premises they will need to consider where the MUR certificates are stored. They could be stored at the premises where the registered pharmacist works, or it may be easier to keep them at head office, particularly where registered pharmacists work at more than one of their pharmacies. Such contractors will need to ensure that copies of certificates are available if requested. The individual pharmacist may also want to retain a copy for their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) record.

ATs will wish to ensure they have access to accurate and up-to-date records showing which of their community pharmacies are providing the MUR service, and also which registered pharmacists at those pharmacies have submitted evidence of their MUR certificate.

3.3 Condition 3 – acceptable locations

The MUR service can only be provided at an ‘acceptable location’ which is defined within Direction 4(5) of the 2013 Directions.

At the pharmacy premises

Where a pharmacy contractor wishes to provide the MUR service at their premises they must have an area for confidential consultations which is:

- clearly designated as an area for confidential consultations
- distinct from the general public areas of the pharmacy premises
- an area where both the person receiving MUR services and the registered pharmacist providing those services are able to sit down together and talk at normal speaking volumes without being overheard by any other person (including pharmacy staff) (Direction 4(5)(a)).

The Directions are not intended to prevent the presence of other persons where the patient requests, or consents. For example, where the pharmacist uses a chaperone, or wishes to include a pre-registration trainee in the consultation as part of their training, this would be allowed if the patient consents. Similarly, the patient may prefer that they are accompanied by another person during the consultation.

If the service is provided when the pharmacy is closed to other members of the public then the first two bullet points do not apply, but the third does. When assessing their compliance with the third bullet point pharmacy contractors will wish to consider the needs of patients with hearing difficulties.

In an area for confidential consultations at premises other than the pharmacy

Where a pharmacy contractor wishes to provide the service at premises other than the pharmacy, for example at a GP practice, then the same standards apply, (Direction 4(5) (b)), i.e. the area for confidential consultations is:

- clearly designated as an area for confidential consultations
- distinct from the general public areas of the premises in which it is situated
- an area where both the person receiving MUR services and the registered pharmacist providing those services are able to sit down together and talk at normal speaking volumes without being overheard by any other person. Again, other persons may be present where the patient requests this or consents.

NHS England (or before 1 April 2013, the relevant PCT) must have approved the premises at which the pharmacy contractor will provide those services, and that approval must not have been withdrawn. NHS England does not specify the conditions that must apply to such premises, however the purpose of requiring approval is to ensure that the setting is appropriate.

At a patient’s home or at a care home

To provide the MUR service to a particular patient on a particular occasion at premises other than those covered above (for example at the particular patient’s home), the pharmacy contractor must obtain NHS England’s approval (Direction 4(5)(c)(i)).

To provide the MUR service to a particular category of patients at premises other than those covered above (for example to a number of patients who live in a specific care home or to a number of patients who live in different nursing homes), the pharmacy contractor must, unless they had, before 1 April 2013, received approval from the PCT which has not been withdrawn, obtain NHS England's approval and NHS England may place conditions on its, or the PCT's approval or specify particular circumstances as to when the service may be provided (Direction 4(5)(c)(ii)).

Over the telephone

MURs may be provided over the telephone to a particular patient on a particular occasion. This may only be done:

- in circumstances where the telephone conversation cannot be overheard, except by someone whom the patient wants to hear the conversation, for example a carer
- with NHS England's approval for the pharmacist to do so on that particular occasion. (Direction 4(6)).

Pharmacy contractors are therefore not routinely expected to provide this service over the telephone and are required to seek NHS England's approval each and every time they wish to do so.

Distance selling pharmacies

There has been some confusion as to whether distance-selling pharmacies are able to provide advanced services at their premises. Regulation 64(3)(a) of the 2013 Regulations states that such pharmacies may not offer to provide pharmaceutical services, other than directed services, to persons who are present at (which includes in the vicinity of) the listed chemist premises. They may therefore provide MUR services (which are directed services) from their premises but must ensure that when doing so they do not provide any element of essential services. When distance-selling pharmacies are considering providing the MUR service to patients on their premises, they may wish to consider, for example, how they are going to respond if the MUR results in the discontinuation of a medicine, or the patient attends the pharmacy with some unwanted medicines. The pharmacy is not able to accept unwanted medicines from persons present at the pharmacy.

4. Ongoing conditions for pharmacy contractors

Where NHS England enters into arrangements with a pharmacy contractor to provide the MUR service, Direction 5 sets out the ongoing conditions for those arrangements. Arrangements with a community pharmacy to provide the MUR service at or from a particular location are to be treated as taking effect once NHS England has received:

- notice from the community pharmacy of their intention to start providing the MUR service (if they are not already doing so)
- copies of the MUR certificates for those pharmacists who will provide the service. (Direction 5(3)).

The PSNC has developed a [form](#) that contractors may choose to use when notifying their AT of their intention to start providing the MUR service.

5. Patient consent

Patients are required to sign a consent form in order to receive the MUR service. If a patient refuses to give their consent then the pharmacy contractor may not provide the MUR service to them (Direction 5(1)(o)).

The patient consent arrangements for MURs are the same as those for the New Medicine Service (NMS) and in order for patients to access the service they must give signed consent for their information to be shared with the GP, NHS England, NHS Business Services Authority and the Secretary of State for Health.

NHS England has approved the wording that is to be used on MUR patient consent forms and it can be found in Appendix 4 and on the [NHS Employers](#) and [PSNC](#) websites. Pharmacy contractors should note that they are not allowed to adapt or change the approved wording in any way, although they may produce their own consent form if they wish using this wording.

This requirement will help to support the development of an MUR evidence base for the value of MURs and will enable commissioners to better quality assure MURs through the capturing of data.

Where a pharmacist believes that it is necessary to share information about the intervention with other prescribers or healthcare providers not covered above, they will be able to seek consent from the patient to share this information. For example, the pharmacist will need to seek the patient's consent to share information with a hospital colleague who has referred the patient to the MUR service and has asked for feedback about the MUR.

The MUR patient information leaflet text has been amended to reflect the requirement for signed consent. You can download the leaflet text from the [NHS Employers](#) and the [PSNC](#) websites. Contractors may use the nationally agreed text in any patient information leaflets they produce for the service but are also free to use their own wording.

6. Patient eligibility

Unless a pharmacist has concerns regarding a patient's adherence to their medication regimen (in which case a prescription intervention MUR may be offered), MURs may only be offered to patients who have received pharmaceutical services from the community pharmacy for a period of at least three consecutive months (Direction 5(1)(e)).

Similarly, a patient must not have more than one MUR consultation in any 12-month period unless it is the registered pharmacist's reasonable opinion that the patient's circumstances have changed sufficiently to justify one or more further consultations during that period (Direction 5(1)(f)(i)).

If the patient has recently been discharged from hospital and had changes made to their medicine while they were in hospital then this is treated as a change in the patient's circumstances and the patient can receive a post discharge MUR within 12 months of their last MUR. Ideally, patients discharged from hospital will receive a post discharge MUR (see section 6.2) within four weeks of discharge, but it is recognised that this might not always be practical so the MUR can take place up to eight weeks after discharge. Pharmacists are advised to ensure they document their reasons as to why they are providing a further MUR within 12 months of a previous one.

If a patient has received a consultation as part of the NMS then they may not normally have an MUR within six months (Direction 5(1)(f)(ii)). However, if it is the registered pharmacist's reasonable opinion that there are significant potential benefits to the patient then they may offer an MUR. If the patient has recently been discharged from hospital and had changes made to their medicine while they were in hospital, then they are able to receive a post discharge MUR (see section 6.2) within six months of receiving the NMS. Pharmacists are advised to ensure they document their reasons as to why they are providing an MUR within six months of an NMS consultation.

The MUR service is only to be provided to patients who are being prescribed more than one drug, unless the only drug they are being prescribed is a 'high risk medicine' (i.e. those listed in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 to the 2013 Directions). Pharmacists should ensure they have a list of those. (Direction 5(1)(n)).

Additionally, at least 50 per cent of all MURs must be carried out with patients who are in one or more of the national target groups, which are set out in Schedule 1 of the 2013 Directions (Direction 5(1)(g)). Pharmacy contractors will wish to ensure they review the patient recruitment section of their SOP for the MUR service to ensure it reflects these changes.

Schedule 1 of the 2013 Directions confirms the three national target groups as patients who are:

- taking a high risk medicine
- recently discharged from hospital who had changes made to their drugs they are taking while they were in hospital
- prescribed certain respiratory drugs.

It is expected that pharmacists will select patients who will benefit most from the MUR service. All patients who receive an MUR should experience the same level of service regardless of their condition. Where a CCG instigates prescription switching where the new prescription will be eligible for a targeted MUR, they may wish to ensure they advise their community pharmacies so that they can identify patients who would then become eligible for the service.

6.1 Patients taking high-risk medicines

'High-risk medicines' are defined within paragraph 1, Schedule 1 of the 2013 Directions as those that are listed in the following [British National Formulary](#) (BNF) sub-sections:

BNF reference	BNF subsection descriptor
10.1.1	NSAIDs
2.8.2 and 2.8.1	Anticoagulants (including low molecular weight heparin)
2.9	Antiplatelets
2.2	Diuretics

A reference group³ was established to identify the most appropriate medicines for inclusion within this target group and the following principles were used to determine the list:

- The medicines should be associated with preventable harm, for example avoidable hospital admissions.
- Medicines where harm can be caused to the patient by omission, overuse or incorrect use and where the benefits of not taking the medicine are foregone.
- The type of harm caused by the medicines could be prevented by an MUR and the pharmacist will have the skills, knowledge and information to deliver it.

There were a number of other high-risk medicines discussed by the group, however it was agreed that the focus should be on medicines where an MUR could improve patient safety and that the purpose of an MUR was not to address problems associated with dosage but with medicines use. The group considered the evidence from recent data and a literature review on medicines that cause admissions to hospital to help inform their choice of medicines for the list.

³ The high-risk medicines reference group included representatives from NHS Employers, PSNC, the Department of Health, the National Patient Safety Agency, the National Prescribing Centre, the Royal College of Physicians, Medway School of Pharmacy, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, East and South East England Specialist Pharmacy Services and UK National Medicines Information.

As healthcare professionals it is appropriate to call these 'high-risk' medicines, however pharmacists should be mindful of using this term when communicating with patients taking these medicines in order not to raise concerns or cause patients to stop taking their medicines. Instead, it is recommended that the terms 'medicines requiring special attention' or 'safer use of key medicines' are used.

NHS Employers and the PSNC will work with NHS England and the Department of Health to develop a process to ensure that this list is kept up to date.

6.2 Patients recently discharged from hospital

These are patients recently discharged from hospital who had changes made to their medicines while they were in hospital. 'Recently' is defined within paragraph 2, Schedule 1 of the 2013 Directions as meaning 'within the previous eight weeks'.

It is anticipated that patients discharged from hospital will receive an MUR within four weeks of discharge but it is recognised that this might not always be practical so the MUR can take place up to eight weeks after discharge. A registered pharmacist should use their professional judgement to determine where a patient will benefit from such an MUR more than four weeks after discharge from hospital. The hospital will also need to consider the issue of consent before referring patients to a community pharmacy.

Example: Identification of an eligible patient

Whilst in hospital a woman's medication is changed. After being discharged she goes to stay with her daughter for a few weeks. On returning home she orders her repeat prescription and visits her normal pharmacy to have it dispensed. Whilst she waits she chats to the counter assistant about her stay in hospital. The counter assistant mentions this to the pharmacist who identifies that the woman is eligible for a targeted MUR and offers the service to her.

This target group is for patients who have had a change to their medicine while they were in hospital. It does not include patients who have been discharged from outpatient clinics or intermediate care services (short-term help provided for patients following discharge from hospital).

NHS Employers and the PSNC convened a hospital and community pharmacy reference group⁴. The group has produced:

- a standardised national referral form. The form is for hospital staff to complete when a patient is discharged and they can either give this to the patient to present at their usual community pharmacy or send the form to the community pharmacy on the patient's behalf. The form can be amended to suit local needs
- a leaflet for patients when leaving hospital outlining the services that community pharmacy has to offer. The leaflet can be amended to suit local needs
- guidance for people working in hospitals about the benefits of linking with community pharmacies
- guidance for community pharmacists about working with hospital colleagues.

These documents are available on the [NHS Employers](#) and the [PSNC](#) websites.

⁴ The hospital and community pharmacy reference group included representatives from NHS Employers, PSNC, the Department of Health, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists, Centre for Postgraduate Pharmacy Education, Royal College of Physicians, Pharmaceutical Advisors Group, East and South East England Specialist Pharmacy Services and NHS Milton Keynes.

6.3 Patients prescribed certain respiratory medicines

The final national target group set out in Schedule 1 of the 2013 Directions is patients taking a respiratory medicine included in the following BNF subsections:

BNF reference	BNF subsection descriptor
3.1.1	Adrenoceptor agonists
3.1.2	Antimuscarinic bronchodilators
3.1.3	Theophylline
3.1.4	Compound bronchodilator preparations
3.2	Corticosteroids
3.3	Cromoglicate and related therapy, leukotriene receptor antagonists and phosphodiesterase type-4 inhibitors

7. Number of MURs that may be provided each year

No more than 400 MURs may be provided at or from each community pharmacy in any NHS financial year, which runs from 1 April to 31 March (Direction 5(1)(d)). This includes MURs offered at all acceptable locations, including those which NHS England has approved to be provided over the telephone.

The only exception to this is during the first financial year that the pharmacy contractor starts to provide the service. In this instance, where NHS England makes arrangements with a pharmacy contractor to provide the service on or after 1 October, the pharmacy contractor may only provide 200 MURs in that first financial year (Direction 5(2)). In subsequent years the pharmacy contractor may provide up to 400 MURs. It is therefore important that pharmacy contractors are aware of when the arrangements are entered into. The arrangements will have been made as soon as the pharmacy has notified NHS England of its intention to provide the service and submitted copies of MUR certificates.

Each financial year, at least 50 per cent of all MURs must be carried out with patients who fall within one or more of the national target groups (Direction 5(1)(g)).

The failure of a pharmacy to deliver at least 50 per cent of MURs to patients in the target groups, or indeed to comply with any requirement set out in the Directions, constitutes a breach of the terms of service⁵. ATs should work with pharmacies throughout the year to monitor the number of targeted MURs that each pharmacy has delivered to ensure that they are on track to meet or exceed the 50 per cent target. ATs can request contractors to complete the quarterly report on MUR activity (see below) to undertake this monitoring. In cases where a pharmacy does not meet the 50 per cent target, NHS England may decide to carry out due process, which may include issuing a breach notice under Regulation 71 of the 2013 Regulations. However, before deciding to do so, they would consider the local dispute resolution processes set out in Regulation 69, taking into account any mitigating factors.

⁵ Regulation 11 of 2013 Regulations.

8. Record of the MUR service consultation

The 2013 Directions contain specific requirements as to the information that is to be recorded by community pharmacies regarding the MUR consultation and to whom it is to be provided.

8.1 Records of MUR consultations

The registered pharmacist who carries out the MUR must prepare a written record of the consultation (Direction 5(1)(h)). Previously pharmacy contractors were required to complete the MUR consultation record (the 'MUR form') for every MUR undertaken. This requirement has been removed and replaced, from 1 July 2012, by the need for pharmacy contractors to capture and retain an MUR dataset for every MUR undertaken. The information to be collected during the MUR is outlined below.

- a. patient demographic details
 - a. name
 - b. address
 - c. gender
 - d. date of birth
 - e. NHS number (where available)
 - f. ethnicity
- b. registered GP practice
- c. target group
 - Respiratory
 - High-risk medicine
 - Post-discharge
 - Not in a target group
- d. total number of medicines being used by patient:
 - a. prescribed
 - b. over the counter and complementary therapies
- e. healthy living advice provided at MUR (using the following options):
 - a. diet and nutrition
 - b. smoking
 - c. physical activity
 - d. alcohol
 - e. sexual health
 - f. weight management
 - g. other (free text information can be entered in the clinical record)
 - h. healthy living advice not applicable at this consultation

- f. matters identified during the MUR (using the following options):
 - a. patient not using a medicine as prescribed (non-adherence)
 - b. problem with pharmaceutical form of a medicine or use of a device
 - c. patient reports need for more information about a medicine or condition
 - d. patient reports side effects or other concern about a medicine
 - e. other (free text information can be entered in the clinical record)
- g. no matters identified during MUR
- h. action taken/to be taken (using the following options):
 - a. information/advice provided
 - b. Yellow card report submitted to MHRA
 - c. referral – patient’s issues raised with the medicine need to be considered by the GP practice or another primary health care provider
 - d. other (free text option in clinical record)
- i. as a result of the MUR the pharmacist believes there will be an improvement in the patient’s adherence to the medicines as a result of the following (more than one may apply):
 - a. better understanding/reinforcement of why they are using the medicine/what it is for
 - b. better understanding/reinforcement of when/how to take the medicines
 - c. better understanding/reinforcement of side effects and how to manage them
 - d. better understanding/reinforcement of the condition being treated

The data collected from each MUR will need to be kept for two years from the date the service is completed and may be stored electronically. Pharmacists may wish to keep clinical records over and above the MUR dataset to support their ongoing care of the patient.

When storing the MUR dataset, community pharmacies should bear in mind the requirements of the information governance programme contained within the acceptable clinical governance system that they are required to have in place by virtue of paragraph 28, Part 4, Schedule 4 of the 2013 Regulations.

8.2 Providing copies of the record to GPs

The community pharmacy is required to provide information to the patient’s GP in certain circumstances. Pharmacy contractors must notify the patient’s GP if the registered pharmacist providing the MUR service is of the opinion that it is appropriate to provide feedback about the consultation (i.e. an issue has been identified) to any provider of primary medical services of which the patient is a registered patient (Direction 5(1)(k)).

The feedback to the patient’s GP must be made on the ‘approved form’, which is the MUR feedback form (Appendix 5). This will be used by pharmacists to inform the patient’s GP of any issues identified during the MUR (Direction 5(1)(k)). The introduction of the MUR feedback form was agreed by the Professional Relationships Working Group which includes NHS Employers, PSNC and the BMA’s General Practitioners Committee (GPC). Using the approved feedback form does not preclude the pharmacist from contacting the patient’s GP via telephone or face-to-face if an urgent issue is identified with the patient during the MUR. This can then be followed up in writing using the feedback form.

9. Provision of data to NHS England

To demonstrate the value of the MUR service it is essential that data is collected to show the benefits to patients. There are a number of changes that will be required to MUR systems and paperwork to facilitate the data collection.

9.1 Requirements from 1 July 2012

Direction 5(1)(j) requires the pharmacy contractor to provide to NHS England or the Secretary of State, on request, information from the records of MURs undertaken. In practice, the information will be provided by the pharmacy contractor to his AT. If requested to do so, each participating pharmacy contractor must complete the [reporting template](#) approved by NHS England (a standard electronic spreadsheet) by collating the necessary data from pharmacy records for the MURs conducted at the pharmacy.

The data is to be collated on a quarterly basis, within ten working days of the last day of June, September, December and March each year. Completed templates must be provided electronically to NHS England on request (which may be an ongoing request).

Data to be provided to NHS England

1. Total number of MURs delivered to patients in each group:
 - patients taking high-risk medicines
 - patients who have been recently discharged from hospital
 - patients prescribed a respiratory medicine within the relevant BNF subsection
 - patients who do not fall within one of the national target groups.

For MURs that fall into more than one national target group, the registered pharmacist should make a determination as to which group the MUR should be allocated.

2. Total number of medicines being used by patients who received an MUR during the quarter sub-divided between
 - 2.1. prescribed
 - 2.2. over the counter and complementary therapies
3. Number of patients where a medication issue was identified by the registered pharmacist and action was taken.
4. Number of patients referred back to the GP practice or another primary health care provider.

5. Number of patients where as a result of the MUR the registered pharmacist believes there will be an improvement in the patient's adherence to the medicines and type of benefit (more than one may apply):
 - better understanding of why they are using the medicine/what is it for
 - better understanding of when/how to take the medicines
 - better understanding of side effects and how to manage them
 - better understanding of the condition being treated.
6. Total number of patients given brief advice about healthier lifestyle and type of advice:
 - 6.1. diet and nutrition
 - 6.2. smoking
 - 6.3. physical activity
 - 6.4. alcohol
 - 6.5. sexual health
 - 6.6. weight management
 - 6.7. other

ATs may wish to use this data in conjunction with the monthly management information system (MIS) report they receive from NHS BSA Prescription Services, to monitor both the uptake of MURs and the percentage undertaken on patients who fall within one of the target groups.

10. Payments

A payment will be made for each completed MUR⁶. Pharmacy contractors claim via the FP34C they submit each month to NHS BSA Prescription Services.

⁶ In September 2013, the payment was £28.

11. Monitoring numbers of MURs

It is important that both pharmacy contractors and ATs monitor the number of MURs that are provided and the number that are undertaken on patients who fall within each of the national target groups.

Pharmacy contractors are permitted to carry out up to 200 or 400 MURs per financial year, and therefore are only entitled to claim payment for a maximum of 200 or 400 MURs per financial year (see section 7 for further information). They are also required to ensure that at least 50 per cent of MURs are completed on patients within the national target groups. There may be fluctuation in the actual percentage achieved each month, but by the NHS financial year end, the pharmacy contractor must ensure that at least 50 per cent of the MURs carried out in that financial year have been carried out with patients within the national target groups.

Where the AT identifies that a pharmacy contractor has claimed more than the requisite number in any one year, this should initially be raised with the contractor using the local dispute procedures under Regulation 69 of the 2013 Regulations. Where the contractor agrees, the overpayment should be recovered via the NHS BSA Prescription Services. Where the contractor does not agree that they have over claimed, or the matter cannot be resolved under the local dispute resolution procedures, the AT may need to issue a breach notice under Regulation 71, and include a payment withholding. The ordering of a withholding does not preclude NHS England for further pursuing the repayment of any overpayment.

See section 7 above for details about pharmacies not achieving the percentage of target group MURs.

12. Discontinuation of service provision

The 2013 Directions make provision for the termination of the MUR service by NHS England (Direction 5(1)(m)):

“the NHSCB [NHS England] must terminate the arrangements if it is on notice that P is not, or no longer, satisfactorily complying with P’s obligations under Schedule 4 to the Pharmaceutical Services Regulations (terms of service of NHS pharmacists) in respect of the provision of essential services and an acceptable system of clinical governance;”

Where a pharmacy contractor is on notice that it is not satisfactorily complying with these requirements, or is no longer satisfactorily complying with them, then NHS England, through the AT must terminate the arrangements for the provision of MURs (Direction 5(1)(m)). As with breach notices, the local dispute resolution procedures may be used first, unless it is inappropriate to do so. Following these procedures, a remedial notice or breach notice may be issued under Regulations 70 or 71 respectively, of the 2013 Regulations.

Pending remedial action, the AT can require in a remedial notice issued under Regulation 70 of the 2013 Regulations, that no further payment will be made for any further MUR consultations until the remedial action has been taken to the AT’s satisfaction. Payments can later be made for any MURs that the AT has accepted were made after the pharmacy was no longer in breach of the terms of service or Directions (Regulation 70(4) of the 2013 Regulations).

NHS England has issued [guidance](#) for ATs on monitoring compliance with the terms of service, including the action they can take where they have evidence that a pharmacy contractor may not be satisfactorily complying with its terms of service.

13. Peer review

We recommend that pharmacists participate in peer reviews to improve their practice and to assure the quality of the MURs they provide. The collection of data on key information about the MUR will help to aid the peer review.

14. Additional resources

The Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (CPPE) has produced a guide entitled *Targeting your MURs more effectively*, which is available from their [website](#).

Appendix 1

What an MUR is and what it is not

What is an MUR?

In the NHS there are a number of different types of medication reviews carried out by pharmacists and other clinicians. An MUR is just one type that focuses on the patient's understanding and use of their medicines.

An MUR:

- identifies whether or not patients understand how their medicines should be used and whether or not they use their medicines as prescribed
- identifies how patients should correctly use their medicines and any issues affecting correct use, for example timing
- identifies if patients know why they have to use their medicines and explains the condition for which each medicine is prescribed
- identifies potential side effects
- identifies medicines no longer used by the patient.

Whilst each of the points above do not in themselves constitute an MUR, an MUR may include discussion about one or more of these areas during the consultation.

There are two types of MUR.

- **Planned MURs** – this occurs when the patient is invited for a consultation. It can be conducted for patients on multiple medicines and those with long-term conditions.
- **Intervention MURs** (or prescription intervention MURs) – this is an MUR conducted around dispensing in response to a significant problem with a patient's adherence to a medicine, for example when a patient needs to develop their understanding of their medicines in order to improve use. The pharmacist will need to decide whether or not the intervention is clinically significant and requires more than brief advice. Dose optimisation and synchronisation of prescribed items alone do not warrant an intervention MUR.

What is not an MUR?

An MUR is not:

- brief advice about dispensed items that would otherwise be an integral part of the essential dispensing service
- any review of medication for which a pharmacy is contracted under another service contract (such as an enhanced or locally commissioned service)
- a full clinical medication review
- a discussion about changes to drug treatment
- a discussion about a medical condition beyond its drug treatment
- a discussion on the effectiveness of treatment based on test results
- a discussion solely for the purpose of dose synchronisation of any one or more items on a prescription
- a discussion solely for the purpose of dose optimisation of any one or more items on a prescription
- a catch up on progress made from a previous MUR unless the required 12-month period has elapsed or there has been a significant clinical change to the patient's circumstances.

Appendix 2

MUR service specification

1. Service description

The Medicines Use Review (MUR) aims to help patients use their medicines more effectively. Following the review, recommendations made to prescribers may also relate to the clinical or cost effectiveness of the treatment. The service includes Medicines Use Reviews taken periodically or when there is a need to make an adherence-focused intervention due to a problem that is identified while providing the dispensing service (a prescription intervention MUR).

2. Aims of the service

To improve patient knowledge, adherence and use of their medicines by:

- establishing the patient's actual use, understanding and experience of taking their medicines
- identifying, discussing and resolving poor or ineffective use of their medicines
- identifying side effects and drug interactions that may affect adherence
- improving the clinical and cost effectiveness of prescribed medicines and reducing medicine wastage.

3. Service specification

- 3.1 The pharmacist will perform an MUR to help assess any problems patients have with their medicines and to help develop the patient's knowledge of their medicines.
- 3.2 No more than 400 MURs may be provided at each community pharmacy in any year (1 April to 31 March). The only exception to this is during the first financial year that the pharmacy contractor starts to provide the service. In this instance, where the NHS England Area Team (AT) makes arrangements with a pharmacy contractor to provide the service on or after 1 October, the pharmacy contractor may only provide 200 MURs in that first financial year. In subsequent years the pharmacy contractor may provide up to 400 MURs.
- 3.3 At least 50 per cent of all MURs undertaken in a year (1 April to 31 March) must be on patients who fall within one of the national target groups. There are three national target groups, which are:

Patients taking high-risk medicines

High-risk medicines are those listed in the following [British National Formulary](#) (BNF) sub-sections:

BNF reference	BNF subsection descriptor
10.1.1	NSAIDs
2.8.2 and 2.8.1	Anticoagulants (including low molecular weight heparin)
2.9	Antiplatelets
2.2	Diuretics

Patients recently discharged from hospital

This group covers patients recently discharged from hospital who had changes made to their medicines while they were in hospital. Ideally, patients discharged from hospital will receive an MUR within four weeks of discharge but it is recognised that this may not always be practical so the MUR can take place up to eight weeks after discharge. A registered pharmacist should use their professional judgement to determine where a patient will benefit from such an MUR more than four weeks after discharge from hospital.

Patients prescribed certain respiratory medicines

This group covers patients taking a respiratory medicine included in the following BNF subsections:

BNF reference	BNF subsection descriptor
3.1.1	Adrenoceptor agonists
3.1.2	Antimuscarinic bronchodilators
3.1.3	Theophylline
3.1.4	Compound bronchodilator preparations
3.2	Corticosteroids
3.3	Cromoglicate and related therapy, leukotriene receptor antagonists and phosphodiesterase type-4 inhibitors

- 3.4 The MUR will normally be carried out face-to-face with the patient in the community pharmacy. The part of the pharmacy used for the provision of MURs must meet the following requirements for consultation areas:
- the consultation area should be where both the patient and the pharmacist can sit down together
 - the patient and pharmacist should be able to talk at normal speaking volumes without being overheard by any other person (including pharmacy staff)
 - the consultation area should be clearly designated as an area for confidential consultations, distinct from the general public areas of the pharmacy.

When a pharmacy is closed to members of the public, MURs can be carried out in a public area of the pharmacy as long as the conversation between the pharmacist and the patient cannot be overheard by any other person (including pharmacy staff).

- 3.5 If a pharmacy wishes to provide MURs in another location they must seek the prior approval of the AT. Carrying out the MUR service away from the pharmacy could include in an area for confidential consultations at premises other than the pharmacy (e.g. at a GP practice); at premises to provide the service to a particular patient on a particular occasion (e.g. in a patient's home); or at premises to provide the service to a particular category of patient (e.g. at a care home).
- 3.6 Where a pharmacy wishes to provide an MUR via telephone to a particular patient on a particular occasion, they must seek the prior approval of the AT. Only when it is not practical for the patient to get to the pharmacy should an MUR be conducted by telephone. The MUR must be conducted in such a way as to ensure that the telephone conversation can only be overheard by someone whom the patient wants to hear the conversation, for example a carer.

- 3.7 All patients receiving the MUR service must sign a consent from which allows the pharmacy contractor to share information from the MUR with:
- the patient's GP, as necessary
 - the AT as part of a clinical audit
 - the AT, NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) and the Secretary of State for Health to verify that the service has been delivered by the pharmacy as part of post-payment verification.

If patients do not consent to share their information then they will not be able to access the service.

- 3.8 MURs can only be conducted with patients on multiple medicines, except where the patient is taking one of the high-risk medicines (see paragraph 3.3). In this circumstance an MUR can be provided for a patient taking only one medicine.
- 3.9 Periodically-provided MURs must only be provided for patients who have been using the pharmacy for the provision of pharmaceutical services for at least the previous three months (the three-month rule). The next regular MUR can be conducted 12 months after the last MUR, unless in the reasonable opinion of the pharmacist the patient's circumstances have changed sufficiently to justify one or more further consultations during this period.
- 3.10 If the patient has recently been discharged from hospital and had changes made to their medicine while they were in hospital then this is treated as a change in the patient's circumstance and the patient can receive a post discharge MUR within 12 months of their last MUR. Ideally patients discharged from hospital will receive a post discharge MUR within four weeks of discharge but it is recognised that this might not always be practical so the MUR can take place up to eight weeks after discharge.
- 3.11 An MUR should not be undertaken on a patient who has, within the previous six months, received the New Medicine Service (NMS), unless in the reasonable opinion of the pharmacist, there are significant potential benefits to the patient which justify providing MUR services to them during this period. If the patient has recently been discharged from hospital and had changes made to their medicine while they were in hospital, then they are able to receive a post discharge MUR within six months of receiving the NMS.
- 3.12 Prescription intervention MURs are provided where there is a need to make an adherence-focused intervention due to a significant problem that is identified while providing the dispensing service. This prescription intervention MUR would be over and above the basic interventions, relating to safety, which a pharmacist would make as part of the Essential level dispensing service and would highlight the need for a more detailed examination of the patient's medication regimen. The three-month rule does not apply to this type of MUR.
- 3.13 In addition to the 50 per cent target detailed above, ATs, working with their community pharmacies, may identify specific patient groups who would be appropriate for targeting, based on the needs of the local health economy. MURs undertaken on local target groups will not count towards the 50 per cent target.
- 3.14 Pharmacists may accept referrals for MURs from other healthcare professionals, and pharmacists can accept requests from patients for an MUR to be conducted as long as the criteria laid out above are met.

- 3.15 The pharmacist is required to capture and retain an MUR dataset for every MUR undertaken. The data collected from each MUR must be kept for two years from the date the service is completed and may be stored electronically. The information to be collected during the MUR is outlined below:
- a. patient demographic details
 - a. name
 - b. address
 - c. gender
 - d. date of birth
 - e. NHS number (where available)
 - f. ethnicity
 - b. registered GP practice
 - c. target group
 - Respiratory
 - High risk medicine
 - Post-discharge
 - Not in a target group
 - d. total number of medicines being used by patient:
 - a. prescribed
 - b. over the counter and complementary therapies
 - e. healthy living advice provided at MUR (using the following options):
 - a. diet and nutrition
 - b. smoking
 - c. physical activity
 - d. alcohol
 - e. sexual health
 - f. weight management
 - g. other (free text information can be entered in the clinical record)
 - h. healthy living advice not applicable at this consultation
 - f. matters identified during the MUR (using the following options):
 - a. patient not using a medicine as prescribed (non-adherence)
 - b. problem with pharmaceutical form of a medicine or use of a device
 - c. patient reports need for more information about a medicine or condition
 - d. patient reports side effects or other concern about a medicine
 - e. other (free text information can be entered in the clinical record)
 - g. no matters identified during MUR
 - h. action taken/to be taken (using the following options):
 - a. information/advice provided
 - b. yellow card report submitted to MHRA
 - c. referral – patient’s issues raised with the medicine need to be considered by the GP practice or another primary health care provider
 - d. other (free text option in clinical record)

- i. as a result of the MUR the pharmacist believes there will be an improvement in the patient's adherence to the medicines as a result of the following (more than one may apply):
 - a. better understanding/reinforcement of why they are using the medicine/ what it is for
 - b. better understanding/reinforcement of when/how to take the medicines
 - c. better understanding/reinforcement of side effects and how to manage them
 - d. better understanding/reinforcement of the condition being treated.
- 3.16 Pharmacists may wish to keep additional clinical records over and above the MUR dataset to support their ongoing care of the patient.
- 3.17 If an issue is identified during the MUR consultation that the pharmacist believes the patient's GP should be informed of, then the pharmacist must complete the MUR feedback form and send this to the patient's GP. Using the MUR feedback form does not preclude the pharmacist from contacting the patient's GP via telephone or face-to-face if an urgent issue is identified with the patient during the MUR. This can then be followed up in writing using the feedback form.
- 3.18 Pharmacists providing the service must have successfully completed an assessment undertaken by a higher education institution based on the nationally agreed MUR competencies. A copy of the 'MUR certificate' for each pharmacist providing the MUR service must be supplied to the AT.
- 3.19 Interventions made as part of an MUR may include:
- advice on medicines usage (prescribed and OTC), aiming to develop improved adherence
 - effective use of 'when required' medication
 - ensuring appropriate use of different medicine dosage forms, e.g. inhaler type, soluble tablets
 - advice on tolerability and side effects
 - dealing with practical problems in ordering, obtaining, taking and using medicines
 - identification of items without adequate dosage instructions
 - identification of unwanted medicines (where the patient is no longer taking the medicines)
 - identification of the need for a change of dosage form to facilitate effective use
 - proposals on changing branded medicines to generics (exclusions will apply)
 - proposals on changing generic to branded where appropriate to ensure consistent supply or when clinically appropriate
 - proposals for dose optimisation (higher strength substitution where multiple doses of lower strength products are prescribed, provided it does not interfere with the patient's clinical management)
 - suggestions to improve clinical effectiveness.

These interventions could be agreed at a local level between the AT, pharmacist and prescribers. For example, highlighting patients who are on a treatment dose of a Proton Pump Inhibitor, rather than a maintenance dose.

3.20 In order to provide the AT with a summary of information on MURs conducted, pharmacies must complete the approved AT reporting template (a standard electronic spreadsheet) by collating the necessary data from pharmacy records for the MURs conducted in that quarter. This must be available to be requested after the end of 10 working days from the last day of that quarter (last day of June, September, December and March). Completed templates must be provided to the AT electronically on request (which may be an ongoing request).

3.21 The data to be provided to the AT on request is set out below.

1. Total number of MURs delivered to patients in each group:
 - patients taking high-risk medicines
 - patients who have been recently discharged from hospital
 - patients prescribed a respiratory medicine within the relevant BNF subsection
 - patients who do not fall within one of the national target groups.

For MURs that fall into more than one national target group, the registered pharmacist should make a determination as to which group the MUR should be allocated.

2. Total number of medicines being used by patients who received an MUR during the quarter, sub-divided between
 - 2.1. prescribed
 - 2.2. over the counter and complementary therapies
3. Number of patients where a medication issue was identified by the registered pharmacist and action was taken.
4. Number of patients referred back to the GP practice or another primary health care provider.
5. Number of patients where, as a result of the MUR, the registered pharmacist believes there will be an improvement in the patient's adherence to the medicines and type of benefit (more than one may apply):
 - better understanding of why they are using the medicine/what it is for
 - better understanding of when/how to take the medicines
 - better understanding of side effects and how to manage them
 - better understanding of the condition being treated.
6. Total number of patients given brief advice about a healthier lifestyle and type of advice:
 - 6.1. diet and nutrition
 - 6.2. smoking
 - 6.3. physical activity
 - 6.4. alcohol
 - 6.5. sexual health
 - 6.6. weight management
 - 6.7. other

Appendix 3

MUR suggested questions

<p>1. How are you getting on with your medicines?</p> <p>This is an open question to get the patient talking and bringing out any issues which are important to them. These can be dealt with here rather than waiting until the appropriate question below. It is also a good opportunity to find out if they are taking any OTC medicines.</p>
<p>2. How do you take or use each of these medicines?</p> <p>This is an opportunity to get users of inhalation devices to demonstrate their usage and for any technique issues to be explored.</p>
<p>3. Are you having any problems with your medicines, or concerns about taking or using them?</p>
<p>GROUP BY THERAPEUTIC AREAS</p>
<p>4. Do you think they are working? (Prompt: is this different from what you were expecting?)</p> <p>This gives a chance to discuss that some patients will not feel any different if some of their medicines are working.</p> <p>Do they know what it is for? It would be useful to say a little about how the medicines work. Some patients may feel happier and more content to take the medicine if they have a rational explanation of how it helps their condition.</p>
<p>5. Do you think you are getting any side effects or unexpected effects?</p> <p>If the patient feels different it may lead them to change their behaviour, even though it is not a side effect of the medicine. This may also be an opportunity for you or the patient to fill in a Yellow Card.</p> <p>This is an opportunity to discuss whether side effects are likely to be transitory and what can be done to minimise them. If severe, the pharmacist could suggest a return to the prescriber and possibly cessation of the medicine.</p> <p>This could also alert to serious side effects that may occur and would involve an immediate need to take action.</p>
<p>6. People often miss taking doses of their medicines, for a wide range of reasons. Have you missed any doses of your medicine, or changed when you take it? (Prompt: when did you last miss a dose?)</p> <p>This question may be a bit challenging so is further down the interview schedule – however on the other hand it may not need to be asked as the issues may already have emerged. It is necessary to explore the reason(s) why this has happened. Was it intentional or not? Was it appropriate (e.g. missing a morning dose of a diuretic because they had a long bus journey)?</p> <p>Does the patient understand why the medicine is necessary?</p>
<p>7. Do you have anything else you would like to know about your medicines or is there anything you would like me to go over again? (Prompt: are you happy with the information you have on your medicines?)</p>

Appendix 4

Approved wording for patient consent form

NMS and MUR patient consent requirements

October 2013

From 1st October 2011, where a patient agrees to participate in the New Medicine Service (NMS) or the Medicines Use Review (MUR) service they must sign a consent form which uses the following wording¹:

Consent to participate in the NHS New Medicine Service/NHS Medicines Use Review Service

I agree that the information obtained during the service can be shared with:

- my doctor (GP) to help them provide care to me
- the Primary Care Trust (PCT - the local health authority) or successor organisation to allow them to make sure the service is being provided properly by the pharmacy
- the Primary Care Trust (PCT) or successor organisation, the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) and the Secretary of State for Health to make sure the pharmacy is being correctly paid by the NHS for the service they give me.

Following the changes to the contracting arrangements for the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework in April 2013, the following revised wording must be used by pharmacy contractors as soon as practicable.

NHS England, NHS Employers and PSNC recognise that pharmacy contractors will wish to use up stock of consent forms using the original wording, but any reprints of consent forms should use the new wording set out below.

Consent to participate in the NHS New Medicine Service/NHS Medicines Use Review Service (delete as applicable)

I agree that the information obtained during the service can be shared with:

- my doctor (GP) to help them provide care to me
- NHS England (the national NHS body that manages pharmacy and other health services) to allow them to make sure the service is being provided properly by the pharmacy
- NHS England, the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) and the Secretary of State for Health to make sure the pharmacy is being correctly paid by the NHS for the service they give me.

¹A template consent form can be downloaded from the PSNC website (www.psnc.org.uk/nms).



Appendix 5 MUR feedback form

NHS Medicines Use Review Service Feedback Form



To: GP Practice Name

Date:

Re. Patient name
Patient address

DOB:

NHS number:

This patient recently received a Medicines Use Review (MUR) which identified issues with the following medicines which are detailed below:

Medicine name(s)

The following matters were identified which require your consideration:

- Potential drug interaction(s)
- Potential side effects/adverse drug reaction preventing use of the medicine
- Patient reports not using the medicine any more
- Patient reports not using the medicine in line with the directions of the prescriber
- Patient reports difficulty using the medicine – issue with the device
- Patient reports difficulty using the medicine – issue with the formulation
- Patient reports lack of efficacy
- Patient reports problem with dosage regimen
- Patient reports unresolved concern about the medicine
- Other (see comments below)

Further information / comments / possible action:

I have advised the patient that, where appropriate, the practice will contact them regarding this matter after considering the above information. Please provide any necessary feedback to me on the outcome.

Pharmacist Name

Telephone:

Pharmacist

Pharmacy Name

Address 1

Address 2

Address 3

Postcode

CONFIDENTIAL

Contact us

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