

The relationship between the New Medicine Service and Medicines Use Reviews

1. NHS Employers and PSNC recognised the importance of explaining the relationship between the New Medicine Service and the Medicines Use Review (MUR) service. This is particularly important as the two services may be targeted at similar patient groups.
2. The NMS aims to provide early support to patients who are newly prescribed a medicine for a long term condition with repeated follow-up in the short term to increase effective medicine taking. This will establish a relationship between the patient and a pharmacist early on and will help to ensure that patients are taking their medicines correctly from the beginning. The MUR service involves reviews that are centered around adherence for patients on multiple or high risk medicines, particularly those receiving medicines for long term conditions. Patients undertaking an MUR will have been taking their medicines for a period of time and may well not be taking them correctly. An MUR can help to address these issues. An MUR can normally be undertaken on a patient every twelve months.
3. It has been agreed that patients should not normally be eligible for an MUR within six months of completing the NMS due to the similarities between the services. The intention is to prevent patients who undergo the NMS being referred immediately for an MUR and to establish a separation between the services in the eyes of patients.
4. This exclusion period does not apply if a patient first receives an MUR. For example, a patient may have already received an MUR for current medication but is then prescribed a new medicine for a long term condition. In this case the patient is eligible to receive the NMS within six months of having an MUR.
5. Although patients will not normally be eligible to receive an MUR within six months of completing the NMS, it is acknowledged by NHS Employers and PSNC that there will be certain instances where patients will benefit from receiving an MUR within the six month period. This is captured in the paragraph below which is included in the service specification agreed between NHS Employers and PSNC.

The patient will not normally be eligible for a Medicines Use Review (MUR) within six months of completing the service, unless in the reasonable opinion of the pharmacist the patient would benefit from an MUR during that period. For example a patient with multiple long-term conditions may be prescribed a new medicine for one condition and be supported in using this medicine by the NMS, but may benefit from the wider advice and support provided in an MUR in relation to medicines they use for another condition.

6. The expectation is that patients will not receive an MUR within six months unless in the *reasonable opinion* of the pharmacist the patient will benefit from an MUR during that period. This is consistent with the Pharmaceutical Services (Advanced and Enhanced Services) (England) Directions 2005 which allow for a patient to receive more than one MUR service consultation in any one period of twelve months if in the reasonable opinion of the pharmacist 'the patient's circumstances have changed sufficiently to justify one or more further consultation during this period'.
7. While it may not be possible to set out every instance where a patient may benefit from an MUR within six months of going through the NMS, an example could be a patient on multiple medicines who has not had an MUR in the previous twelve months.
8. It is expected that pharmacists who undertake an MUR on a patient within six months of them receiving the NMS will record why the MUR was undertaken. This will then be audited as part of the normal contract monitoring process.
9. After the six month exclusion period, it may be possible for the services to be linked and be mutually supportive. For example, a patient who completes the NMS may be recommended by the pharmacist to have an MUR in nine or twelve months time to review how they are getting on with their medicine.