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Cessation of remote deliveries of medication – from 1st September 2016

We have recently undertaken a review of our dispensing policies after a Fatal Accident Enquiry in Kingussie, where a patient died after being given the wrong medication by a pharmacist. This has highlighted the legal requirement of the dispenser to make certain that the right medication is received by every patient.

Our current systems of medication delivery have evolved over the years to include remote collection at Lochaline Stores, and a grace and favour service from the local postmen to take medication to more isolated patients. These systems were in place when I first started work in the practice 22 years ago and the GP surgery was further from the village at Aline Park. There were no reception staff in post and it was challenging for patients to pick up medication only during surgery hours. I feel that we must now address the significant patient safety issues around dispensing, and have decided that all medication **must now be collected from Morvern Medical Centre.**

I realise that this may cause significant hardship to some patients, and have not undertaken this change lightly. I will be happy to discuss this issue in the surgery with any patients, but would stress that this change is being implemented by Morvern Medical Centre. In particular, the grace and favour service from the local postmen has **never** been sanctioned by the Post Office so we would ask that concerns about medication deliveries are directed **solely to the surgery**, not to the posties or Lochaline Stores.

The number of prescriptions issued has risen steeply in the past 20 years so the pressure on remote delivery points is increasing – also increasing the risk of dispensing error. Morvern Medical Centre reception desk is staffed from 8.30am to 1pm Monday to Friday, with additional staff in the office until 5pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. We feel that collection from the surgery is the only way to ensure a safe service.

For patients who cannot attend the surgery themselves, they should nominate another person to collect and sign for their medication. We will supply forms so there is written confirmation of these arrangements.

Please ensure that you do not run out of medication, and give at least 48hrs notice when handing in repeat prescription request slips, or phoning for medication. The staff may not be able to dispense medication the same day that requests are made.

I do apologise for any inconvenience this may cause, but patient safety is our main concern in this matter. This new system will start from 1st September 2016.

Dr Susan Taylor