

Proxy Access Medication Ordering - Friarwood GP Surgery and Willow Park Care Home

May 2025

INTRODUCTION

Friarwood Surgery in Pontefract have been working with the PCN Digital and Transformation (D&T) Team, to explore ways to optimise processes and improve efficiencies in prescription ordering for care homes. Several practices across Wakefield identified that traditional prescription ordering from care homes could be lengthy, inefficient, and prone to errors.

Following NHS England guidance, the implementation of proxy access for prescription ordering in care homes was identified as a solution which could provide several benefits to practices, care homes and patients.

This initiative supports the best practice for CQC registered care homes and GP practices to work together to allow care home staff to order patient medication.

WHAT IS PROXY ACCESS?

Proxy access, sometimes known as third party access, allows for someone other than the patient to access and manage parts of an individual's GP online services account.

A person using proxy access is given their own login to an account rather than using the patient's. This means that everyone has their own profile and can access only specified data within the account.

Proxy access is often used by parents of young children and the recognised carers of adults. With care homes, GP practices can set up proxy access specifically for repeat medications, meaning care home staff can only order these and cannot see other parts of the resident's record.

However, if a care home resident does not consent to proxy access for repeat medication, the paper-based process can continue to be used.



Willow Park Care Home



Friarwood Surgery

WHO WAS INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT?



Care Home Lead: Louise, the Care Home Manager at Willow Park, took on this role. She was responsible for discussing the changes with residents and their representatives, briefing other care home staff, and working closely with Friarwood and the D&T Team.



GP Practice Lead: Practice Manager, Karen, worked with the Care Home Lead to set up the proxy access account for Willow Park and linked each named resident within the care home, after consent was gained



Designated Care Home Staff: Nominated staff at Willow Park were trained by the D&T Team to use SystmOnline for medication ordering. These staff are responsible for ordering medication using the agreed process and adhering to security and confidentiality requirements, including up-to-date information governance training.



GPs: GPs at Friarwood Surgery continue to use their existing processes to authorise or reject medication requests submitted through the proxy access system.



Pharmacy Technician: Emma, the Pharm Tech, was involved in the initial planning and helped to review the process, identify issues, and provide feedback to the D&T team to support and rectify any issues arising.



Digital and Transformation Team: Hannah from the D&T Team managed the project and was involved in explaining the process, agreeing on next steps, providing training and support to Willow Park staff on using SystmOnline. Hannah was also tasked with writing a short case study on the project, including the process, lessons learned, evaluation, and staff feedback.

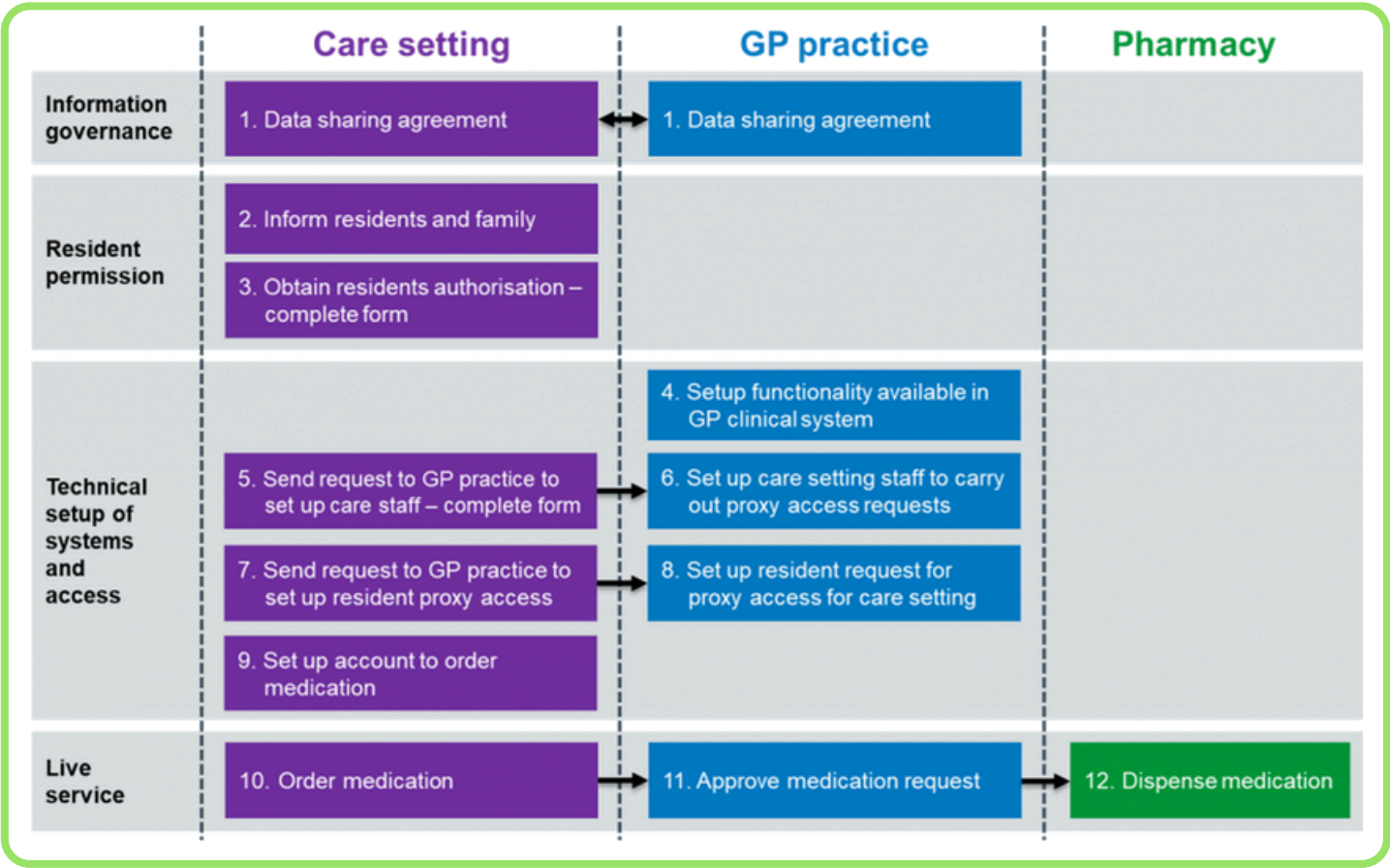


Residents (or their representatives): Willow Park Care Home was responsible for asking all residents to complete a consent form and provide necessary patient information. Permission from residents (or their representatives) was crucial for granting care home staff proxy access to their GP record. This includes individuals with legal power of attorney (POA), court-appointed deputies, or the resident's GP or next of kin (if they considered proxy access to be in the resident's best interest according to the Mental Capacity Act 2005).

STEP BY STEP PROCESS



The table below outlines the actions which were completed by Willow Park Care Home, Friarwood Surgery and the community pharmacy.



TIPS FOR SUCCESS OF A FUTURE ROLE OUT



Communication: Clear and consistent communication and engagement from the outset across all stakeholders (Friarwood Surgery, Willow Park staff, residents, and their representatives) is vital. A communication plan should ensure everyone understands the new process and timelines.



Information: Careful consideration of the information being shared is important. The data sharing agreement should be adapted locally and agreed upon by the practice and care home.



Resources: Ensuring that both the care home and GP practice have sufficient skilled personnel, technology, materials, and equipment is crucial for the successful implementation of proxy access. This includes involving administrative, nursing, and care staff.



Planning: Developing a detailed implementation plan with clear objectives, timelines, assigned tasks, and responsible individuals is essential for staying on track.



Staff buy-in: Involving staff from the outset and appointing a lead within each organisation to discuss and agree on new processes will encourage buy-in. All care home staff authorised to handle medications need to be informed and adequately trained.



Business as usual: Establishing a plan for the ongoing management of the process once it is implemented is necessary. This includes procedures for briefing and training new staff and ensuring a transition away from paper-based ordering. A standard operating procedure should be in place for all staff to refer to.

OUTCOMES - POTENTIAL AND PLANNED ✓

The full impact of the proxy access project for both Friarwood and Willow Park are still being assessed but already, emerging themes are:

- **Improved efficiency:** Streamlining the prescription ordering process for care homes.
- **Reduced errors:** Minimising mistakes associated with manual or paper-based ordering.
- **Enhanced quality of care:** Ensuring timely and accurate medication ordering for residents.
- **Audit trails:** The GP system maintains an audit trail, recording who accessed the record and when, what medication was ordered, and who authorised or rejected the request and when. This enhances accountability and transparency.
- **Adding notes to the GP:** Care home staff can include notes to the GP when ordering, which can be particularly useful for medications requiring review.
- **Staff satisfaction and engagement:** Hannah from the D&T Team was tasked with evaluating the project and gathering feedback from staff, which would provide insights into the actual impact and lessons learned.

PROTECTING PATIENT PRIVACY ✓

Protecting resident privacy is paramount. The following measures were put in place:

- **Data Sharing Agreement:** A data sharing agreement between Friarwood Surgery and Willow Park CH was required.
- **Information Governance (IG) Training:** All authorised care home staff were to be up to date with IG training and requirements.
- **Secure Email System:** The care home was expected to have a secure email system, preferably NHSmail.
- **Consent:** Explicit consent from residents (or their representatives) was required before granting proxy access.
- **Limited Access:** Proxy access was set up for repeat medications only, preventing care home staff from viewing other parts of the resident's GP record.
- **Process for Breaches:** A process needed to be in place to manage any breach of confidentiality or misuse of proxy access.

SUMMARY

- 4 members of Willow Park care home staff have been trained to use SystmOnline for Medication Ordering
- 52 Friarwood patients residents registered at Willow Park
- 98 % of these patients signed up online

CONTACT DETAILS

For more information on the project or to register your interest in Proxy Access Medication Ordering contact: digitalsupport.wakefield@nhs.net

The practice contact details:

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