Dear 

Further to your request for information dated the information requested is below

1. **Does your Clinical Commissioning Group operate a Prescription Ordering Desk?**

   Yes the CCG operates the Prescriptions Ordering Direct service on behalf of CCG member practices

2. **Was the implementation of this scheme consulted on and if so, with who?**

   Yes, consultations took place at CCG Medicines Optimisation Group, Clinical committee and Quality, Finance and Performance meetings
   The groups comprise clinicians, patient representatives and lay members

3. **Was a Quality Impact Assessment carried out before the introduction of the Pod?**

   No. However a Quality Impact Assessment is being completed and will be shared amongst stakeholders

4. **Was a safety review and risk assessment carried out before the implementation of the Pod?**

   No
5. Has your PoD ever been out of operation since it started? If yes, how many times?

The POD experienced telephone outage on four occasions since inception in January; the longest for an hour.

6. Do you have an up-dated business continuity plan after the introduction of the Pod?

The POD service is a limited pilot, should a major incident occur that results in major outage of service patients will be redirected to their relevant practice to fulfil their prescribing requests.

7. How many complaints have you received at the CCG or patients’ surgeries concerning their experiences as a result of the implementation of your PoD? Do you have a process in place to capture these complaints and deal with them and if so please provide a copy of it?

Since inception of the service in January, the CCG has received 6 complaints about the POD. The complaints are logged and handled via a formal complaints process.

8. Can you confirm whether the reduction in prescription items or costs, as a result of implementing the PoD is:

- Due only to patients reducing their prescription item repeat requests when phoning the POD.
- Due to the surgery refusing/ reducing patients’ requests to prescribe repeat items when the PoD is closed?

The reduction in prescription items would be the result of improved efficiency in the management of repeat orders i.e. patients are able to order no more than the items they need at the appropriate time. Previously many patients could request all repeat items without adequate checks being made to validate the request.

- Other reason (if so, please detail)?

N/A

9. Please provide information on the numbers of staff engaged in providing the PoD service, responding to patient repeat prescription requests and queries, and the cost of employing staff to man the phones and run/manage the POD, to date and in the future for this financial year.

10. Please provide other information on the costs of IT and training of staff on the Pod.

IT set up costs for the POD equated to £18,833 which covers Swale and DGS practices. Training is provided at no extra cost by staff employed by the CCG.
11. Please provide information on the qualifications of staff answering patient telephone order requests. Are they all trained or what proportion of them are?

Following recruitment, POD staff are trained by experienced pharmacy technicians and pharmacists employed by the CCG. Staff recruited for the POD are required to have prior NHS/Healthcare and/or customer service experience.

12. Have any patients been taken off their medicines or a repeat refused by Pod operators, without referral to their General Practitioner for a medication review?

The POD does not take patients off or refuse repeat medication requested by patients except when they are not yet due for a repeat. In that case patients are advised on the appropriate time to call again. Other queries about repeat medication requests are referred to their GP.

13. How many calls to the POD resulted in referral to the patient’s doctor or the urgent supply of medicines in hours or out of hours (referral to OOH service)?

POD does not deal with emergency out of hours medication requests.

14. Is your POD currently restricted to a specific number of surgeries or specific types of patients? Please state the current surgeries that are involved and what are the plans for the future?

At present, only six practices in DGS are participating in the POD service namely The Oaks Swanley, The Cedars Swanley, The Shrubbery Practice, Temple Hill Surgery, The Gateway Practice and Whitehorse Surgery. Patients who receive their medicines in monitored dosage systems (dosette boxes) and those which the practices deem to require extra support (e.g. visually impaired or those with learning difficulties) are exempted from making repeat requests via the POD service. In the future, more practices may be invited to join the POD on a voluntary basis.

If you have any queries or concerns please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the service that you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision you should write to Complaints. NHS Dartford Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group 2nd Floor Gravesham Civic Centre Gravesend Kent DA12 1AU or email at dqscgg.complaints@nhs.net

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint or review, you may apply to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Clinical Commissioning Group. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:
Information Commissioners Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone: 08456 306060 or 01625 54 57 45
www.ico.gov.uk

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.