

The Right Medicine to the Right Person at the Right Time



Ms Koay Wei Ying

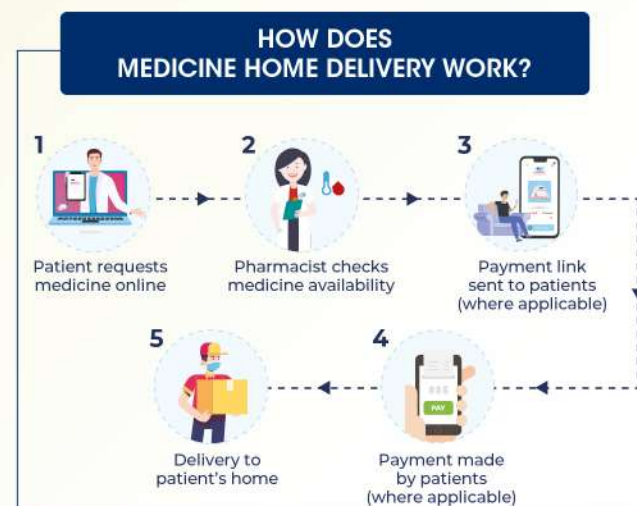
As a convenience to patients, IJN has been re-filling patients' prescriptions via home delivery services since 2010. During this time of the pandemic, the hospital has stepped up its efforts to make it easier for patients to get their medication, with the best intentions of keeping all and sundry safe and as protected as possible from the scourge of the COVID-19 virus.

"With the SOPs and especially with the MCOs and the travel restrictions, our primary concern was to ensure that patients could get the medicines they needed on time. This is especially important as our heart patients must have their regular supply of medicine," says Pharmacy Operations Support Manager, *Ms Koay Wei Ying*.

IJN fills patients' prescriptions three ways now.

Medicine Home Delivery (MHD)

This service was introduced in 2010, especially for patients who live outside Kuala Lumpur or those who cannot commute easily. MHD is just a click away as patients just need to go into the IJN website, fill in their details in the online form and submit. The medicine will be delivered by Poslaju within 5 - 10 days, and very often even sooner than that.



"There are limitations though, as cold chain medicines, inhalers or liquids, such as syrups for paediatric patients, are not suitable for postal delivery," says Wei Ying.

She adds that while all government employees can easily switch to MHD, those who are not would have to abide by the conditions set by their payors.

Previously, patients would have to submit MHD requests each time they needed to refill their prescriptions. Today, the IJN pharmacy auto-refills the prescriptions until the patient's next doctor's appointment.

Drive-Thru Pharmacy

Initiated as another option because of COVID-19, Wei Ying says this option soon became an effective way to reduce patient crowd at the hospital pharmacy.



"Patients do not need to queue and they save a lot of time as the counter medicine collection process can sometimes take more than an hour. It also greatly reduces the issue of maintaining physical distancing at the waiting areas."

"Nevertheless there is still a small waiting period, but this is the ideal way to collect prescriptions that cannot be posted," she adds.

Patients who opt for drive through collection should request three days in advance, so the pharmacy team has time to prepare the prescription. Medicines, especially the cold chain medicine, are packed with ice packs and patients are required to bring their own cooler bags to ensure such medicines are kept at temperatures of between 2- 8 degrees Celsius until they get home.

"We have found this method to be quite effective, so we plan to continue with this service indefinitely."

MEDiLoC

MEDiLoC is a locker system whereby patients are given a passcode via sms to open up a locker which they can access at any time during the day or night to collect their medicines. This is especially useful for those who are too busy or unable to come during scheduled refill hours and each patient is given a window of 48 hours to pick up their medication.

"These three options cater to different patient needs and cover more than 90% of our repeat prescriptions," says Wei Ying.

"We encourage as many of our patients as possible to opt for these alternative refill methods. To streamline our pharmacy operations, we will only allow walk in refills from 2-4pm Mondays to Fridays from 13th December 2021 onwards. This way we can serve our daily clinic patients in the morning, and then those who come in for refills later."

The IJN pharmacy fills out more than 20,000 prescriptions a month in total.

"Pre-COVID, we used to send out some 300-400 prescriptions each week for MHD. In 2021, this number steadily increased and by September 2021, we filled more than 30,000 prescriptions, with the packages sent to both local and international patients, including those who have been "stuck" overseas during this pandemic period.

We certainly have had our work cut out for us, and we have a dedicated team who is solely in charge of processing MHD."

"We've had to adapt, be flexible, and I am happy to say we have managed well. The name of our game is to get the right medicine to the right person at the right time."

