
Royal Mail partners with Pharmacy2U for same day deliveries of medication

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Royal Mail is launching same day deliveries for some Pharmacy2U medication and healthcare products - initially via the Chemist Direct brand - following a surge in demand during the pandemic.

The service, which will initially focus on some postcode areas in Yorkshire, aims to give customers a speedy, convenient and secure way to order and receive medicine from the comfort of their own home.

The launch comes as Royal Mail research reveals that since the start of the pandemic 4.3 million adults across the UK have ordered medication online to be delivered to their homes for the first time.

With three national lockdowns in the past year encouraging people to limit their travel, around 39% of those who ordered medication online to be delivered by post in the past 12 months did so for the first time, according to new Royal Mail research.

The research also reveals that one in eight adults (12%) currently have medication regularly delivered in the post and a further 9% have previously had medication delivered through the post. Of these people, 57% currently receive prescription medicine compared to 43% currently receiving non-prescription medicine. Four in five (81%) of these prescriptions are repeat.

The main reasons for people getting medication delivered include: for ease and convenience (59%), to avoid making journeys to the pharmacy (37%) and to avoid risk of infection from COVID-19 (24%). Other drivers include to avoid queueing in the pharmacy and due to shielding.

Looking ahead, just under a quarter (22%) of UK adults would be likely to order any type of medication online to be delivered in the post in the next year. Of these, three in five (59%) would be likely to use a same day delivery service for medication.

Reflecting the change in healthcare practices in the last year, just over half (52%) of people have had a remote medical appointment since the start of the pandemic.

In the coming months, Royal Mail and Pharmacy2U will extend their partnership to

continue improving the patient experience and innovate in the delivery space. Although the service offers greater convenience for all, it is especially important for vulnerable people who are less comfortable with leaving their home at the moment.

The move comes as Royal Mail continues to help in the nation's fight against the Coronavirus pandemic. Royal Mail has been working closely with pharmacy companies and NHS trusts across the UK throughout the pandemic by delivering prescriptions, vaccination and hospital appointments. Royal Mail has also been a key partner for the Government's Coronavirus testing programme since the start of the pandemic, delivering and collecting test kits across the UK since April 2020.

Mark Livingstone, CEO at Pharmacy2U, said: "The Coronavirus pandemic has shifted people's behaviours drastically and brought forward digital uptake for many. At Pharmacy2U we are doing all we can to remain at the forefront of consumer demand and bringing medicines straight to your front door is part of that. Through this partnership with Royal Mail, we're hopeful that repeat prescriptions will become even more accessible and it will lead to more people adhering to their doctor's orders. We look forward to continuing our excellent customer service through this partnership."

Nick Landon, Chief Commercial Officer at Royal Mail, said: "At Royal Mail, we have a healthy obsession with solving customer problems. When people aren't feeling well they want an immediate fix and that's what we're aiming to deliver with 'instant pain relief' delivered straight to their door. We're working with Pharmacy2U to deliver medicines on the same day they are ordered and look forward to significantly expanding this service in the future. The last year has reset many of our expectations for delivery and coupled with the convenience of home delivery, no queues and a reduced risk of infection we think this service is just what the doctor ordered."

(Royal Mail)