

Press release

No more paper: e-prescriptions are coming

Heerlen, 9 July 2021 – e-banking, e-bookings, e-mail: in some parts of our lives, digital processes and products have long been perfectly normal. An e-mail is nothing special, but letters are almost a rarity. With doctors' prescriptions, printed pink forms handed over in person are still the norm – around 500 million paper prescriptions are issued every year. This is finally changing: e-prescriptions are coming. Sonja Thüllen, chief pharmacist at DocMorris, answers the most important questions on them.

What is an e-prescription?

“e-prescription” is short for “electronic prescription” and means doctors' prescriptions are sent electronically rather than on paper. It's as simple and straightforward as sending an e-mail. “All doctors' practices, pharmacies and health insurers are linked to a shared database. The prescribing doctor enters the e-prescription in the database and uses a special software to issue a key. This key is given to the patient in the form of a code. The patient can then give the key-code to the pharmacist of their choice, who downloads the prescription from the database, checks it and issues the medication to the patient”, is Sonja Thüllen's simplified description of the process.

What are the benefits of e-prescriptions?

Digital transmission saves time and effort for both online and bricks-and-mortar pharmacies. DocMorris clients no longer need to go to the postbox. “e-prescriptions also offer considerable benefits when it comes to providing medication effectively”, says Sonja Thüllen. “Prescriptions are documented automatically, so it's easy to update patient files. Electronic signatures and central storage also increase security. The process makes it easier to spot forgeries and prevents the same prescription being dispensed multiple times.” e-prescriptions mean the cycle of patient care can take place fully online, if desired; from arranging a video consultation with a doctor online to issuing the e-prescription and having the medication delivered by an online pharmacy. A genuine alternative.

Where are e-prescriptions being used?

A three-month test of e-prescriptions using Berlin-Brandenburg as a focus region has been under way since 1 July 2021. Selected doctors, pharmacists and patients are trying out the new process for issuing and dispensing e-prescriptions. All statutory health insurers will be able to use e-prescriptions

from January 2022. A test phase across Germany is being launched on 1 October 2021. Work is under way on e-prescriptions for people with private health insurance.

How are e-prescriptions dispensed?

According to the Federal Ministry of Health (FMH), patients can choose whether they wish to receive and have their e-prescriptions dispensed fully digitally, or whether they want to be given a hard copy in the doctor's practice. "Full digital processing of e-prescriptions means the patient has to have the e-prescription app from gematik. This allows users to locate participating pharmacies, including DocMorris, to forward the e-prescription to", explains chief pharmacist Sonja Thüllen. "If the patient wants a hard copy of their e-prescription to have it filled, DocMorris provides a handy scan function on the web site and in the app so the prescription information can be sent quickly to DocMorris in digital format", she says. "Anyone who prefers to use the tried and trusted method can continue to post their hard copy prescription to DocMorris free of charge."

For more information on e-prescriptions go to <https://www.docmorris.de/service/infos/e-rezept>.
(German only)

DocMorris is already taking part in the test phase of e-prescriptions in Berlin-Brandenburg and is supporting the launch with a major publicity campaign focusing on electronic prescribing and dispensing. The slogan "The new healthy" aims to encourage people to think about modern healthcare. Digitalisation in the healthcare sector has to help patients, make processes simpler for them and ensure delivery is rapid, secure and first-class – in towns and in rural areas. Access to health will not be dependent on time, place or channel. For example, the DocMorris app already allows patients to order their OTC medications and healthcare products directly and arrange a video consultation with a qualified doctor from Germany. Digitalisation aims to provide greater added value for each individual.

For more information on the DocMorris campaign go to <https://www.docmorris.de/dasneuegesund>.
(German only)

The DocMorris healthcare platform

The DocMorris healthcare platform is a fully-owned subsidiary of the Zur Rose Group of Switzerland, which generated revenue of EUR 1,022.5 million in the Germany segment in 2020 and currently has 9.8 million active customers. The platform covers all activities related to holistic digital healthcare provision, from diagnosis with an online doctor to pharmaceutical advice and the medication, healthcare product or digital solution required. The DocMorris healthcare platform is the market leader in online pharmacies and the leading provider of health tech solutions in the prescription process and telemedicine. DocMorris also provides a digital healthcare offering that helps people locate the best possible care. The DocMorris healthcare platform gives customers easy access to all healthcare services in one place – at a single click.

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