International Post Corporation

Prescription Posties

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In creating the Royal Mail Health division, the company is working across the healthcare industry, including with local pharmacies, to ensure consumers can quickly and conveniently access the healthcare and medical products they need, through whichever route they choose to purchase. Royal Mail Health is transforming access to healthcare and will deliver care to the nation's doorstep through a range of new services that enable every consumer to better access their healthcare needs on their terms. This positions Royal Mail to play a leading role in the growing trend to put power in the hands of patients and their loved ones.

Royal Mail is building on its experience from delivering during the pandemic. The company has been a key partner for the Government's COVID-19 testing programme since the start of the pandemic, increasing capacity to c.1 million test kit deliveries a day in December 2021. Royal Mail also introduced a unique network of priority postboxes for the rapid return of test kits to labs to help in the country's fight against COVID-19.

Royal Mail Health will initially focus on the following four areas of healthcare delivery:

1. Providing healthcare direct to homes

Royal Mail Health recognises the importance of the growing online pharmacy market. Royal Mail Health will be developing its partnership with Pharmacy2U further in 2022 to make sure that NHS patients who are prescribed medication can order and receive it quickly and conveniently with free delivery.

The UK prescription market is growing 3.5% year on year with 5% of prescriptions now online, according to NHS figures. There is increasing consumer demand for access to prescription medicines delivered direct to people's homes, reinforced by changes in online shopping behaviours in the last two years. According to recent research*, almost a quarter (24%) of UK adults have ordered a prescription online and had it delivered to their home. And 35% of adults who haven't used this service would consider doing so. This increases to almost half (49%) for 18-44 year olds.

Royal Mail already has a strong presence in the healthcare market, delivering the majority of prescriptions which are ordered online.

2. Creating local to local networks to support pharmacies

As the UK's sole designated Universal Service Provider, Royal Mail is at the heart of every community and is trusted to deliver to over 31 million addresses across the UK, at least six days a week.

Royal Mail Health recognises the vital role the UK's 12,000 pharmacies play for local consumers and patients and it will be building a local to local network. This will enable Royal Mail Health to collect healthcare products from independent pharmacies and deliver those to the pharmacist's local patients. This will ensure the safe delivery of medicines to ensure patients get the medicines they need at the right time.

3. Digitally connecting community pharmacies and patients

Royal Mail Health has invested £1 million in Charac, the NHS-integrated, one-stop platform for independent community pharmacies. This is to support the changing role of the local community pharmacist as the nation's healthcare system evolves.

Working with Charac, local pharmacies will be able to provide an online ordering system for their patient's healthcare products as well as enabling a fully digitised way to book follow-up consultations and services in the local pharmacy. In doing this, Royal Mail Health understands the importance of working on all aspects of patient's healthcare needs as pharmacists develop a broader relationship with the communities they serve.

4. Checking on vulnerable people

Building upon the important role they played as key workers during the pandemic, Royal Mail Health will explore opportunities for posties to check on vulnerable people, ensuring they get access to the care and support they need. Royal Mail Health is identifying potential partners to work with in this space and planning trials.

Stefan Kulik has been hired as Managing Director of Royal Mail Health to lead the company's expansion into the industry, supporting healthcare and pharmaceutical companies. Stefan has a breadth of experience working in healthcare, with previous roles held at companies including Johnson & Johnson.

Stefan Kulik, Managing Director of Royal Mail Health, said: "Royal Mail is uniquely placed to help the nation manage its health more easily, by bringing together two professions at the heart of the community: the postie and the chemist. As one of the country's most trusted institutions, this is the right time for Royal Mail to build on the support it has provided during the pandemic and its existing partnerships with online pharmacy providers.

"We know the importance of delivering care to the nation's doorstep and ensuring the

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reliable and safe delivery of medicines to ensure patients get the healthcare they need at the right time. We want to help everyone across the UK access their health needs quickly and conveniently, in whichever way they choose to."

Last year, Royal Mail worked with businesses including Pharmacy2U to trial same day delivery of 'over-the-counter' medicines and faster deliveries of prescriptions to some postcode areas across the UK. These trials provided customers with a speedy, convenient and secure way to order and receive vital medicine from the comfort of their own home. Royal Mail is now reviewing options to roll-out these services more widely.

Source: Royal Mail

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