

Dec 3, 2022

Dear Patients of Dr. Pepe & Dr. Lin-Pepe,

We have always strived to provide extraordinary care to our patients that is not only convenient but superior in quality.

Over the last 4 years we have reviewed many office policies based on the current needs of our practice and assessed our abilities to provide certain services. Most recently, we have re-evaluated our use of secure messaging and aligned our processes to help us more efficiently support forms and note requests.

An additional area in which we have been evaluating is that of prescription renewal requests. These are fax based requests which we have been asking you to make to your pharmacy so that we can be aware of when you need a renewal and fill the medication accordingly.

Each request we have received takes on average 5 minutes to process and involves - receiving and filing the fax, notifying the physician and then the physician conducting a medication review to ensure it can be safely renewed and providing the prescription. As we receive about 30-40/day this amounts to 150-200 minutes of time per day or almost 3 hours of clinical time per day.

Effective December 16th, 2022 the Office of Dr. Pepe & Dr. Lin-Pepe will no longer renew prescriptions through fax requests by the pharmacy and will charge \$25.00 / prescription request for a medical fill without an office visit.

We recognize that this is a significant change and in order to support you we will be offering Prescription Renewal Request visits to allow you to have your medications renewed with the intent of giving you 1 year of medications where applicable and indicated. Please note, we still require at least 7 days notice prior to booking these appointments in alignment with our current policy for notice of requests for prescription renewals.

What Else Has Been Tried Before This?

Please know that charging a fee for prescriptions is something we have tried to avoid. For the last 4 years we have tried a number of approaches to reduce the number of prescription requests including:

- We have tried to synchronize all of a patient's medications so that they all come due at once.
- We have tried to ensure patients have ample repeats on their prescriptions.
- We have tried reminding patients to check for repeats through multiple methods before contacting our office.
- We have tried to encourage patients to call in for all their medications at once, rather than one at a time.

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- We have tried to encourage patients to get their prescriptions renewed during actual visits, rather than calling in later.

Unfortunately, none of these efforts have been successful to a satisfactory level. Every day, our office still receives a huge number of prescription requests, even from patients who:

(i) Already have repeats at their pharmacy;

(ii) Call in for one medication one day, and then call in for another a few days later, instead of calling in for them all at once;

(iii) Call in for a prescription even though they just recently saw the doctor and could have asked for it then.

(iv) Have misplaced prescriptions that were already given.

How Will Charging a Fee help?

For years, many physicians' offices have already been charging a fee for prescriptions without visits.

These offices report the following advantages:

- Patients take increased responsibility and improve organization of their medications.
- The number of prescription requests drops significantly, from hundreds down to less than a few per day, in most cases.
- This frees up staff and physician time to care for patients. It also frees up the telephone and fax lines for more urgent matters.
- In many cases, if a patient is running out of medications, it is time for the patient to come in for a visit anyway, which in turn improves patient care.
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Please know that charging a fee is not an attempt to collect revenue from patients. Rather, the primary intent is to decrease the tremendous administrative burden of avoidable prescription requests.

We look forward to continuing to provide our patients with the quality and timely care they expect and deserve.

Yours truly,

Dr. Daniel Pepe & Dr. Cassandra Lin-Pepe