Patients are being urged to help reduce the amount of prescription medicines which are being wasted every day.

Throughout the country the wasted medication amounts to £300 million a year - enough to pay for nearly 12,000 additional community nurses or more than 80,000 hip replacement operations.

The Burbage Surgery patient group is taking part in a campaign with 12 other practices in the area to urge patients to think carefully when they order their repeat prescriptions.

Group chairman John Moore said: "It is a staggering amount of waste which could be put to much better use, especially when NHS resources are so stretched."

"Please ask yourselves: 'Do I really need this.' If it's a medication that you take infrequently and you already have supplies, wait until next time. It will not be removed from your repeat list.

"If it's something you no longer take, tell the surgery so that it can be removed or, if necessary, an alternative can be prescribed."

The patient groups at the 13 surgeries in the Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton areas will be taking their campaign to Woodlands Garden Centre at Stapleton in June with a stand to spread their message as part of the annual NAPP (National Association for Patient Participation) Awareness Week activities.

If you have medication which is out of date or which you no longer use, take it to a pharmacy so that it can be disposed of safely. Please do not flush it down the loo.