

January 2023

Medicines Management Newsletter



RQIA has produced this newsletter to assist in improving practice for the safe management of medicines in registered services.

1. Inspection Outcomes

In the last inspection year (1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022), across a range of services, our pharmacist inspectors have identified a number of areas for improvement which would promote the delivery of safe and effective care. The most common have been in relation to:

 Governance and audit

 Medicine records

 Storage of medicines

Governance and audit

It is important that services have systems in place to review the quality of medicines management. Audit procedures must be comprehensive so that all aspects of medicines management are reviewed on a regular basis and include all formulations of medicines.

Community Pharmacy Care Home Support Service Update

In December 2021 a new Community Pharmacy Care Home Support Service (CPCSS) 2021/22 was commenced by Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) in conjunction with community pharmacies.

The service:

- is available to all nursing and residential care homes registered with RQIA
- can only be provided to a care home from one community pharmacy
- should be provided by the pharmacy that provides the routine dispensing service to the care home where possible

To date approximately 80% of care homes have signed a service agreement form with their community pharmacy.

Feedback from care homes who have already received a community pharmacy visit has been very positive. Care home staff have expressed how beneficial and supportive they have found the service, which has helped improve medicines management systems within the home.

- If you have not already signed the service agreement form with your community pharmacy, we would strongly encourage you to contact them to see if they are in a position to provide the service.
- If you have already signed a service agreement form with your community pharmacy, but you have not yet agreed a suitable date for a visit, **please contact them to see if a visit can be arranged as soon as possible.**

If you have any queries in relation to this service please contact Breege Brogan Breege.Brogan@hscni.net or Gillian Plant Gillian.Plant@hscni.net.

An audit tool to support this work was produced and the link is included below. This can be downloaded and printed for use as an internal audit of medicines management and could help to identify any shortfalls in your systems.

<https://hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2271>



Medicine Records

The most common issue with medicine records has been inaccurate or incomplete personal medication records (kardexes). As these records are often used as a reference source for other healthcare professionals when reconciling medicines, these records should be:

- up to date and correlate with the most recent prescription
- updated by two suitably qualified staff members and signed by those staff to confirm accuracy
- removed from the medicines file, cancelled, dated and archived when they are obsolete so that they are not referred to in error.

Some care homes use pre-printed medicine administration records (MARs) - these must correlate with the personal medication records and demonstrate that the medicines have been administered in accordance with the prescribers' instructions.



Storage of Medicines

- All medicines must be kept in locked cupboards or trolleys, suitably labelled and stored at the correct temperature.
- Refrigerated medicines must be stored between 2°C and 8°C, with maximum and minimum temperatures recorded daily. The thermometer must be reset every day. Corrective action must be taken if the temperature is not between 2°C and 8°C
- Systems should be in place to monitor the date of expiry of medicines, particularly eye drops, insulin and some liquid medicines.
- In **nursing homes**, controlled drugs in Schedule 2, 3 and 4 (part 1) must be denatured prior to being uplifted for disposal.

Managers and staff should re-familiarise themselves with the medicines management standards for their service. All standards can be found at the following link.

<https://www.rqia.org.uk/guidance/standards/>

2. Medicine related incidents/ notifications



Between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, 1440 medication related incidents were reported to RQIA from nursing and residential care homes. On 229 occasions, homes were requested to submit further information via the web portal, either because insufficient detail was provided in the initial submission or a poor action plan to prevent a recurrence was recorded.

When should a medication related incident be reported to RQIA?

Any incident involving medicines where there has been an error (which has the potential to affect the health and well-being of the service user) while:

- prescribing
- preparing
- dispensing
- administering
- monitoring
- providing advice on medicines

All notifications should include the following 'essential information':

- any effect the error has had on the service user's health and well-being
- what medicine was administered/omitted in error, and why
- how many incorrect doses were administered/doses were missed
- how the error was identified
- the changes in the medicines systems which have been implemented to reduce the likelihood of a recurrence
- confirmation that learning from this incident has been shared with all relevant staff
- confirmation that the service user/family, GP, care manager have been informed

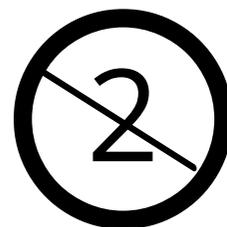
Further information may also be required depending on the circumstances. Please provide as much detail as possible and contact the pharmacist team if necessary for advice.

Guidance on notifications is available on [RQIA's website](#)

3. Infection Prevention and Control

Single use medicine cups/syringes/spoons

For the purposes of infection prevention and control, products marked for single use only, with the following symbol, must only be used once and then disposed of – they cannot be washed and reused:



Please look at the bottom of medicine cups to check if they are single use.

Inhaler Spacer Devices

Staff should ensure that there is no build-up of residue by ensuring that they are washed regularly in warm soapy water and that each one is clearly labelled with the service user's name. They should be covered when not in use.

4. Contact Details

RQIA's Guidance Team

If you wish to contact us regarding a concern or for advice about a service, you can use the following options:

 RQIA's Guidance Team (Mon-Fri 9am-4pm): **028 9536 1990**, any calls received after 4pm will receive a callback within 24 hours from a member of the Guidance Team

 info@rqia.org.uk

 The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority,
7th Floor Victoria House,
15-27 Gloucester Street,
Belfast,
BT1 4LS



Pharmacist team at RQIA

- Helen Daly, Pharmacist Inspector, helen.daly@rqia.org.uk
- Catherine Doherty, Pharmacist Inspector, catherine.doherty@rqia.org.uk
- Rachel Lloyd, Pharmacist Inspector, rachel.lloyd@rqia.org.uk
- Philip Lowry, Pharmacist Inspector, philip.lowry@rqia.org.uk
- Paul Nixon, Pharmacist Inspector, paul.nixon@rqia.org.uk
- Cathy Glover, Senior Pharmacist Inspector, catherine.glover@rqia.org.uk

Contact Details for Local Integrated Care Offices:

Belfast	South Eastern	Southern	Northern	Western
12-22 Linenhall Street Belfast BT2 8BS	12-22 Linenhall Street Belfast BT2 8BS	Tower Hill Armagh BT61 9DR	County Hall 182 Galgorm Road Ballymena BT42 1QB	Gransha Park House 15 Gransha Park Clooney Road Londonderry BT47 6FN
Tel: 028 9536 3926	Tel: 028 9536 3926	Tel: 028 9536 2104	Tel: 028 9536 2812	Tel: 028 9536 1082
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