

Care About Medicine

Providing Domiciliary Care Staff with information, support & guidance on managing medicines safely & effectively

Issue 7 - May 2023

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Giving medicines safely with food or thickened fluid

It is important that what we give service users medication with doesn't adversely affect the way the medication works. Some service users may need to be given their medicines in food (if covert administration required), crushed or with thickened fluid if they have swallowing difficulties. This should only be done following an assessment and following documented guidance from a Health Care Professional.

Which foods or fluids to use

- **Texture** - always follow SALT guidance following an assessment
- **Heat** - The food or fluid should be cold or warm, not piping hot
- **Choices** - Yoghurt, custard and apple puree are common choices
- **Bitterness** - Crushed tablets or capsule contents may taste very bitter. It can be helpful to mask the taste of these medicines by using a strongly-flavoured food (e.g. chocolate custard) or thickened fluid (e.g. blackcurrant squash that has been thickened)
- **Milk** - A few medicines should not be given with milk. The dispensing label will say if this is the case. Avoid using yoghurt or custard to give these medicines. Apple puree would be a suitable alternative

General Points

- Instructions to crush tablets or open capsules, and administer with soft food or thickened fluid should be included in the service user's MAR chart or care plan, and ideally on the medicine's dispensing label
- Not all tablets can be crushed or capsules opened and it is important this has been checked with a pharmacist and documented.
- Not all medicines can be given with food. The dispensing label will say if food or milk has to be avoided before or after taking the medicine. If in doubt, check with a pharmacist.
- Prepare medicines one at a time. Do not crush all the service user's medicines together. Once prepared give immediately
- Use a small amount of food or thickened fluid (e.g. a teaspoon) to ensure the full dose is taken.
- If taken with a meal, the medicine should be added to the first mouthful of food, not sprinkled over the whole dish. Do not add a medicine to a whole glass of thickened fluid

Expiry dates

Quick reminder of the need to add dates of opening to those medicines that have a limited shelf life once opened i.e. eye drops, liquids, creams etc. These tubes have a 14 day shelf life once opened so its good practice to put a date of opening on them in case there are any left over at the end of the 14 days due to refusals.



Please notify us of any changes to contact details. This could be a change of manager, email address or phone number. If we don't have your most up to date contact information you may be missing out on important communication.



Safeguarding Reporting

It is important that where a medication related incident caused or could have caused harm a safeguarding referral is made to the following organisations:

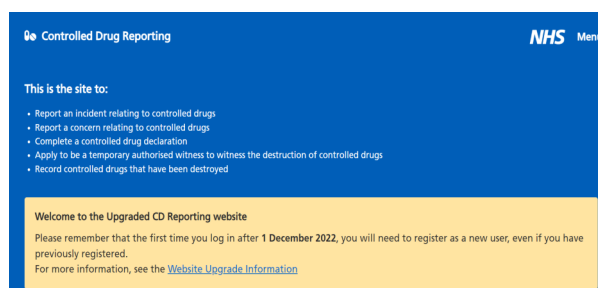
- **Nottinghamshire County Providers** - contact MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) on Tel. 0300 5008090 or complete the online form located [here](#)
- **Nottingham City Providers** - contact the Safeguarding Team on Tel. 0300 1310300 option 2 or email adult.contactteam@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
- Please copy Tania Cook (taniacook@nhs.net) into all medication related safeguarding referrals
- CQC
- ICB Quality Team (nnicb-nn.chhcqualityteam@nhs.net)

When incidents occur it is important that all staff involved are fully supported. Managers should ensure that the incident is investigated to understand why it happened and take action to reduce any risk of the incident happening again in the future.

Reminder - CD Incident Reporting

All medication incidents relating to Controlled Drugs (CDs) need to be reported via the Controlled Drug reporting website – www.cdreporting.co.uk. Full guidance on completing the report is available on the website. If you are visiting the website for the first time you will need to register (full details on how to do this is also available). You will need the following information to completing the incident report:

- Date, time and where the incident took place
- A description of the incident and what learning has taken place
- Information on individuals involved
- Information of physical and psychological harm to person and person outcome
- Details of CD medication or device involved
- Information of other organisations that may need to be informed of incident
- Any supporting information that may be required as listed (this can include photo evidence)




The local Police will also need to be informed if any controlled drugs cannot be accounted for.

Free online insulin safety training for health & social care staff during Insulin Safety Week 15th-21st May.

See flyer attached to the email sent with this newsletter.

HOW TO REGISTER:

- 1 Go to CDEP's website at www.cdep.org.uk or scan your phone here: 
- 2 Click on the link in the top right corner: SIGN IN/REGISTER
- 3 Under NEW CANDIDATE REGISTRATION, enter your EMAIL address and click CREATE ACCOUNT
- 4 Complete the rest of the registration form and you're all set!

For FREE access, enter the **REGISTRATION KEY CODE: NOTTSCARES**

*If this code is not entered, you will not be able to access CDEP for free. Please [contact CDEP](#) if you need assistance.

Don't forget we are here to help. If you need any support or guidance on the management of medicines within your service please get in touch (details below).

Our '**medication guidance for home based care & support providers**' is also available [here](#).



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