

# Medicine Matters

North of England  
Commissioning Support

Medicines information for care staff in a social setting

Autumn 2017

## The State of Care

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has recently published their report on the state of health care and adult social care in England 2016/17.

The key finding was that the majority of people are getting good, safe care, and many individual providers have been able to improve.

Section 2 of the report focuses on adult and social care settings with the following key messages:

- The best performing homes were well led with strong leadership with an innovative approach. Working well with staff and people using the service, carers and families .
- Maintaining a clear focus on person centred care, understanding interests, likes and dislikes.
- Explanation of the role of CQC was also given with respect to how poor care is identified and how they ensure that providers and managers tackle problems and put things right for the benefit of people using services, their families and carers



Further information regarding this report is available:

[http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/20171011\\_stateofcare1617\\_report.pdf](http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/20171011_stateofcare1617_report.pdf)

## Annual Flu Vaccine

Its that time of year again to ensure that the flu vaccine is administered to all those eligible, as advised by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). The national flu immunisation programme aims to provide direct protection to those who are at higher risk of flu associated morbidity and mortality. This includes children, older people (>65 years old) , people in long stay residential care homes, pregnant women, and those with certain underlying medical conditions.

The underlying clinical conditions include people with :chronic (long-term) respiratory disease e.g. asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or bronchitis, chronic heart disease, such as heart failure , chronic kidney disease, chronic liver disease, chronic neurological disease e.g. Parkinson's disease or motor neurone disease, or learning disability, diabetes, splenic dysfunction, a weakened immune system due to disease (such as HIV/ AIDS) or treatment (such as cancer treatment), morbidly obese (defined as BMI of 40 and above).

Social care providers, nursing and residential homes, and independent providers should also offer vaccination to staff. Staff in the residential and care home sector, as well as staff providing care to people in their own homes, are working with some of the most vulnerable in our communities, so it is important that they help protect themselves and service users against flu.

Further information regarding this season's campaign: <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/>

## The Medicines Optimisation Website

Information, guidance documents and various medicine related tools are accessible via our website. These can be downloaded and many may be adjusted to suit your needs.

NECS Medicines Optimisation website:

<http://medicines.necsu.nhs.uk/resources/care-homes/>

# Lessons Learnt

## Transdermal patches

We have recently encountered a number of care homes where transdermal patches are not being applied in accordance with the prescribers or manufacturers instructions. Common issues include:

- Incorrect frequency of application
- Incorrect site of application
- Incorrect variation in the site of application
- Not recording the removal of the previous patch before applying the subsequent dose.

Patches should be applied to clean, dry, hairless, intact healthy skin. **Always check with the prescribers instructions and the patient information leaflet for where the patch should be applied.**

A number of different products are frequently prescribed, many of which have different duration of action and therefore require removing and replacing at different intervals. Commonly used transdermal patch applications include:

Transdermal Preparation	Frequency of Application	Comments
Fentanyl Patch	Every 72 hours	Controlled Drug
Buprenorphine patch	Different products require different dosing regimens: please check the label carefully before applying	Controlled Drug
Hyoscine patch	Every 72 hours	
Rivastigmine Patch	Every 24 hours	Reapplication to the exact same skin location within 14 days should be avoided to minimize the potential risk of skin irritation

For our transdermal application record chart follow: <http://medicines.necsu.nhs.uk/necs-good-practice-guidance-and-tools-for-care-homes/>

## Survey Monkey

Thanks to those of our readers who responded to the recent survey regarding our Medicine Matters newsletter.

The majority of respondents were care home managers and their deputies although senior care staff and GPs also provided feedback.

The majority said that they read the newsletter electronically but some identified difficulties in opening (and therefore sharing) the document

⇒ We have changed this edition to an alternative format in response

All felt that a quarterly newsletter was appropriate which the majority liked and felt it was informative with the main topics being useful and relevant and easy to read and understand.

Our Lessons Learnt section was identified as helping to promote good practice.

A number of future topics were identified by our respondents which included clinical areas such as pain management and mental health medicines. Good practice guidance with regards to storage, record keeping and controlled drugs was also identified as useful.

Thanks again for your support please contact us at any time if you have further ideas or comments to help improve this newsletter.

### Bank Holiday planning

It's coming up to that time of year again when we have a double bank holiday in the month, which sometimes leads to over-ordering of medicine stocks and last minute requests for supplies.

Please ensure that you work closely with your community pharmacist and GP practices, to agree arrangements, of when best to request and order your routine medicine supplies. Note: ensure you have made appropriate arrangements to take into consideration any time issues or delays regarding electronic or written prescriptions. This is of particular importance for controlled drug as they can only be issued on green prescriptions (FP10).

If you have any questions regarding this newsletter or if you have an idea for an article to be included in a future issue, please contact us on tel: 0191 2172558 where you will be forwarded to the most appropriate member of the team

*Please don't forget to share this newsletter with your colleagues!*