

County Durham and Darlington Drug and Therapeutic Clinical Advisory Group Annual Report 2016 - 2017

Chairman's Report

I am pleased to be able to report how successfully the D&T CAG has continued to operate during 2016/17.

The D&T CAG has continued to support the Area Prescribing Committee which deals with topics which cross the primary care interface, leaving the D&T CAG to focus on primary care issues and supporting medicines optimisation agendas of the Clinical Commissioning Groups.

The D&T CAG brings together senior primary care clinicians with pharmacists and nurses to provide a forum to discuss local prescribing and medicines optimisation matters.

Dr James Carlton
Drug and Therapeutics CAG Chair

Meeting Attendance

The County Durham and Darlington Drug and Therapeutics CAG serves the local population and has primarily a primary care focus.

Primary Care is well represented with GP Prescribing Leads from each CCG in County Durham and Darlington playing an active role in the committee and its functions. In addition to this, membership includes representatives from nursing, NECS, community pharmacy, and public health, The Regional Drug and Therapeutics Centre, and others from a wide variety of professional, clinical, commissioning, and managerial and organisational backgrounds.

The full terms of reference of the committee can be found on the NHS County Durham and Darlington website at:

<http://medicines.necsu.nhs.uk/committees/durham-darlington-committees/>

The committee meets in Durham on a bi-monthly basis, with meetings occurring on the third Tuesday of every other month and between April 2016 and March 2017 the Committee met five times.

Successes

The agenda for the D&T CAG is always full meaning keeping within the two and a half hour schedule is a challenge and this year there have been a number of successes:

Developing Clinical Guidelines:

- Magnesium supplements guideline
- Psychotropic drug monitoring guideline in conjunction with mental health trust.
- Regional antimicrobial prescribing guideline for primary care

Governance:

- Regular review of national best practice (i.e. NICE, MHRA safety alerts)
- Monitored the financial performance of the prescribing budget.
- Reviewing audits of Urgent Care Centre Antibiotic prescribing
- Reviewed Terms of Reference of group.

Other:

- Horizon scanning with the RDTC
- Developing a prescribing engagement scheme for 2017/18
- Continuing to work with Community Pharmacies via their LPC representative on the Committee.
- Reviewing and recommending various rebate schemes where appropriate
- Drug of Abuse briefing issued to primary care and local community pharmacies.
- Baseline audits to support national call to action to stop overmedication in patients with learning disabilities.
- FAQs document on Medicines Use in Schools issued.
- Memo on branded prescribing of inhalers to avoid patient confusion and ensure patient safety issued.
- GP information leaflet to support use of ciclosporin eye drops.

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- Reviewed implications of latest Public Health England guidance in Vitamin D locally and issued updated local prescribing advice.
- Worked with LPC to review processes and systems in place for community pharmacies and managed repeats. This included the issue of memorandum of understanding with local community pharmacies to tackle inappropriate practices with regard to repeat prescriptions/dispensing.

Associated Committees

The D&T CAG has close links with other committees in order to foster an integrated approach to developing guidance and advice on medicines related issues. These groups include:

- Local Prescribing Groups
- Area Prescribing Committee
- Formulary Steering Group

Communication

Communication of the activities of the D&T is by a number of means and this follows the Medicines Management Communications Strategy.

One of the most effective methods of communication has been the County Durham and Darlington pages of the NECS Medicines Optimisation website:

<http://medicines.necsu.nhs.uk/guidelines/durham-darlington/>

The website was developed to improve communication and make key documents more accessible to stakeholders and has open access for prescribing guidelines, D&T Minutes, APC minutes and key documents, All prescribing guidelines, shared care guidelines and prescribing memos ratified by the committee are available on the website.

Key points raised by the D&T CAG are notified to practices in a newsletter which contains updates on D&T decisions and is sent to all primary care

practitioners in County Durham and Darlington on a bi-monthly basis.

Key points raised by the D&T CAG are also notified to community pharmacies via the LPC newsletter which contains updates on D&T/APC decisions.

Plans for the future

The D&T has played an important role in medicines management in County Durham and Darlington for a number of years. Following a review of its role and remit in the light of the formation of the new Regional Medicines Optimisation Committees in England from April 2017, and other changes to local prescribing forums the D&T CAG has agreed to disband as of August 2017. This is because many of its functions are now covered by locality prescribing groups in each individual CCG, the CD&D Area Prescribing Committee, and the NE Prescribing Forum.