

Medicine Matters

Medicines information for care staff in a social setting

Spring 2019 (CD update edition)

Gabapentin/ Pregabalin: Controlled Drug changes

From 1 April 2019, gabapentin and pregabalin will be reclassified as **Schedule 3 controlled** drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001, and Class C of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. They will be **exempted from the safe custody requirements** under the Misuse of Drugs (Safe Custody) Regulations 1973.

The impact of these changes will affect the way that Prescribers and supplying pharmacies manage these medicines but **should not affect care homes significantly**.

What does this mean for care homes?

As with other controlled drugs (CDs):

- Prescriptions written for gabapentin or pregabalin will require that the prescriber writes the quantity required to be supplied in words and figures. This may mean that a request for a prescription MAY sometimes take longer.
- The prescription must be dispensed within 28 days of the prescribing date.
- The quantity must not exceed 30 days' supply.
- If collecting gabapentin or pregabalin from the GP practice, staff will be asked to produce proof of Identification and sign for receipt.
- When collecting a supply from the supplying pharmacy the prescription MUST be signed for by the carer (on the back of the prescription) with proof of identification
- On delivery to the home by the pharmacy representative (usually driver), the medicines should be signed for.
- For residential homes, pregabalin and gabapentin may be returned to the pharmacy for disposal and recorded in the "medicines for disposal" records

Some practices have recently changed the arrangements for electronic prescription supplies (EPS) for controlled drugs. However, it is expected that EPS will soon be enabled for scheduled 2 and 3 controlled drugs.

Please check with your GP practice regarding obtaining further prescriptions for controlled drugs.

What records need to be kept in the care home?

As schedule 3 "non-safe custody" controlled drugs, pregabalin and gabapentin DO NOT need to be recorded in the CD register or stored in the CD cupboard

What about storage?

As schedule 3 "non-safe custody" controlled drugs, pregabalin and gabapentin DO NOT need to be stored in the CD cupboard

Care homes with NURSING care: T-28 Exemption Certificates

Care home providing nursing care need to make arrangements for the collection of waste medication with a Waste Management Regulations licensed waste disposal company. CDs must be denatured before being handed to the waste disposal company, e.g. in specially designed denaturing kits. A T28 exemption will be needed in order to comply with the legislation that is overseen by the Environment Agency.

The information about this waste exemption, including how to apply for it, can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/waste-exemption-t28-sort-and-denature-controlled-drugs-for-disposal>

An updated list of controlled drugs commonly used in care homes is included with this newsletter; please ensure staff are aware of these updates.

For further information regarding the management of controlled drugs in care homes please see our website

If you have any questions regarding this newsletter please contact us on Tel: 0191 2172558 where you will be forwarded to the most appropriate member of the team

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:**

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