

Toolkit No 16 – EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

It is a requirement of the new pharmacy contract that “*all equipment used in the provision of pharmaceutical services is maintained appropriately*” (Essential Service 8: 2.3.2).

You ought to be able to demonstrate that you are doing so, and keep a record of this.

It has been hard to get definitive policy from either the NPA or the RPSGB, however we can suggest the following guidance. The RPSGB will be updating its guidance on near patient testing.

Guidance:

Refrigerators

You ought to be recording both the maximum and minimum temperatures daily. A chart for doing so can be purchased from the NPA code RT R5005 – cost £2.20.

Balances

If you are using a balance this should be serviced regularly. There is no legal requirement for crown stamped balances, but it is recommended that they should be serviced every two years. They should also be checked for accuracy on a regular basis between services. For advice on how to perform a simple accuracy check, contact the manufacturer.

You may have your balance serviced by sending off to the NPA code BAL000 – cost £40.00.

Weighing Scales for Patients

These should be checked for accuracy – for advice check with the manufacturer.

If you purchased a “payable” device from the NPA, the ones made by Faraday, you can arrange this direct with them on 0207 607 8601.

Automatic Tablet Counters

You should keep a record of cleaning and accuracy checks performed (usually daily), again you can contact your manufacturer for servicing requirements.

Blood Pressure Meters

You should use validated equipment. This should be re-validated as required by the manufacturer, usually every two to three years. Some have found it more cost effective to replace their equipment after this time interval.

You can find a list of validated equipment on the British Hypertension Society website:
www.bhsoc.org

This also lists discontinued devices which are validated and contact details of the manufacturers. I have included these lists for your convenience. The RPSGB Practice Guidance on Blood Pressure Monitoring can be found on www.rpsgb.org/pdfs/bpmonitguid.pdf

Blood Glucose Monitors

You will need to check with the manufacturer of your device as to how the equipment is re-validated. However it is recommended that you perform a control test before each patient (Vantage Health Watch Scheme).

Further guidance on early identification of diabetes is available from the RPSGB –
www.rpsgb.org/pdfs/diabguid3.pdf

Cholesterol

Further guidance can be obtained from the manufacturer of your equipment. Practice guidance on Cholesterol Testing is available from the RPSGB on www.rpsgb.org/pdfs/choltestguid.pdf

I have included the RPSGB practice guidance on Testing of Body Fluids which gives a brief insight into both of the above as well as urine testing.