

Information from the NHS Devon's Accountable Officer's Department

Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of a special newsletter highlighting some recent Controlled Drug errors and issues, from which shared learning can be gained. This has been written in response to demand from Community Pharmacists during a recent LPC Pharmacy Forum where we had the opportunity to discuss some anonymised incidents and to explore the learning as a result.

Controlled Drug Incidents

Here are a few of the CD incidents that have happened over the last few months.

- **Missing Controlled Drugs;** There have been a few incidents recently where there have been missing CDs, including unexplained discrepancies from the CD register. There was also an incident where a box of Concerta XL went missing soon after delivery. Regular balance checks, ideally weekly, would make resolution of any balance discrepancies easier. It is also important to secure all CDs immediately or as soon as possible following receipt of the delivery.
- **Incorrect supply of Methadone Sugar Free or Non Sugar Free.** The most common error reported is the erroneous supply of Sugar Free Methadone instead of Non Sugar Free or vice versa.
Steps taken by staff at some pharmacies to minimise the potential of this error occurring include;
 - annotating the PMR accordingly
 - highlighting 'SF' on the prescription form with a highlighter pen,
 - making dispensary staff aware which patients take each formulation
 - separation of Sugar Free and Non Sugar Free preparations as far as possible within the CD cupboard.
- **Failure to check the patient's name and address.** This may sound very simple, but there have been three incidents reported to NHS Devon regarding the wrong dose of Methadone given to clients, due to mistaken identity. Please ensure that the necessary checks are made as to the patient's identity before dispensing.
- **Fentanyl and Butrans Quantities.** Just a reminder about pack sizes. We have had some incidents where the incorrect quantities of Fentanyl and Butrans were dispensed, due to confusion over pack sizes. In one incident 10 fentanyl patches were dispensed instead of the 8 prescribed, two boxes of 5 Fentanyl patches were dispensed each labelled as containing 4 patches.
- **Incorrect Deliveries.** There have been a number of incidents where CDs have been delivered to the wrong patient. Please ensure delivery SOPs are adhered to.

Supervised Consumption Service Level Agreement

Following an incident recently please be aware of the need to obtain specific permission from Devon Drug Service before restarting a suspended prescription for a client.

This is written in the current Service Level Agreement

4.2 All missed doses should be reported to the client's key worker the following working day.

4.3 Medication must not be dispensed to any client who has missed three consecutive doses. This is due to reduced opiate levels within the body and an increased risk of overdose. In all instances of a client attending for their medication after missing three consecutive doses, the pharmacist must withhold the client's daily dose and refer the client back to their key worker or prescriber before any further dispensing occurs. The pharmacist should also inform the key worker that a dose has been withheld and must not issue any further medication unless a specific instruction to endorse this has been given by the key worker/prescriber or their nominated deputy at the prescribing agency.

CD Destruction

All pharmacies carrying out destruction of CDs on the premises are reminded that a T28 exemption from the Environment Agency must be obtained before any destruction can take place.

The Environment Agency website details are; www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/permitting/121138.aspx which has online application and electronic form application. The general enquiries number is 08708506506

Contact Details

Please continue to inform the Accountable Officer's Department of any CD related issues.

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information in this Newsletter. This information is published only for NHS use in the Devon Health Community.	NHS Devon Accountable Officer's Department		
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