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Medicine Supply Chain Problems

We wrote you to at the end of last year about the Secretary of State Andrew Lansley’s dismissal of pharmacy medicine supply chain problems. Because we feel so strongly about the issue we are going to repeat the audit we ran in late 2010, to support the Chemist and Druggist’s campaign. You will find more information and copies of the audit template with the newsletter and on our website. We want to run the audit from the 23rd January until the 4th February, and hope you will support your LPC in continuing to highlight issues that impact on your day to day working practice.

New Medicines Service - Success Stories

We asked you to send in some positive experiences from your first three months of offering the NMS to you patients – thank you to all of you who did. Here are some of your highlights!

- A lady who started taking metformin came in for her intervention appointment. She had not realised that the increased flatulence that she was experiencing was being caused by her new medication. As she also had a colostomy the pharmacist referred her back to her GP, who reviewed the situation and took the decision to change her to gliclazide.
- A man starting to take bendroflumethiazide came in for his intervention and was experiencing some mild gastrointestinal symptoms. The pharmacist reassured him that it was most likely to be a side effect of his new medication that would pass, and they both agreed that the patient would continue with the new drug until the follow up stage. By that time the side effect had passed. He was grateful for the pharmacist’s input, as he had been wondering about stopping the new medication before the intervention.
- A lady diagnosed with asthma and prescribed a salbutamol inhaler for the first time signed up to the NMS. At the intervention consultation it became apparent to the pharmacist that all was not going well as the patient was reporting no relief from the inhaler. With some further discussion and questioning it became apparent that two things were wrong. Her inhaler technique was poor, and she had only been using the inhaler once a day instead of four times. Although both had been discussed at the time of dispensing, the patient needed the intervention to improve her technique and understanding of her new medicine.

An underlying theme with most of you who replied to us was that your patients were appreciative of the NMS service, and that you were having some very rewarding conversations with them as you delivered the service. Not only is this good news for patients, but also for our profession as we start to build up evidence of the value of the pharmaceutical care that we provide. Thanks again for your feedback. Keep your stories coming in! We still have a few book vouchers left for the best ones!

Now that three months have passed since it was launched, we would like to gauge how NMS is settling in across Devon. If you could spare us one minute of your time before the end of January, please complete our “very brief” on line survey on our website. The survey is completely anonymous, and will help us to evaluate the take up of NMS so far. We will post some feedback on the website in early February. Thanks for your time! http://www.lpc-online.org.uk/devon_lpc/?news_id=3971

Seamless Care for Patients

New guidance has been published showing how the New Medicine Service (NMS) and post discharge Medicines Use Reviews (MURs) can be used to provide a seamless care pathway for patients who transfer from hospital to the community setting.

Developed and published by the NHS Employers organisation and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) working with a hospital and community pharmacy reference group, the guidance has been endorsed by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS).

Hospitals and community pharmacists can use the **support tools** to formalise how they share information about changes to patients' prescriptions. This will help ensure patients get the right medicines and the most value from them when they transfer care, as well as potentially reduce the risk of hospital readmissions. A **national referral** form has also been designed, to embed, improve and mainstream this good practice. All of the tools and resources may be found on the PSNC website (http://www.psn.org.uk/news.php/1218/guidance_on_post_discharge_nmsmur_published)

New Medicines Service – Patients Knowledge of Warfarin

The New Medicines Service has been benefiting patients for over three months now, and a recent study confirmed a real patient need for quality advice on warfarin, that pharmacists could effectively deliver using NMS.

The study looked at 181 patients who were taking warfarin, it asked them a number of questions about the drug and how they were taking it. The study claimed that as warfarin is such a potentially dangerous drug due to its thin therapeutic index and numerous drug interactions, patient knowledge of these risks to warfarin is vital to improve safety.

The results were stark:

- 48% of patients were unaware of any potential drug interactions
- 57% of patients were unaware of potential side effects
- 79% kept a record of their INR
- 20% had experienced side effects
- 11% had been hospitalised by the side effects

This study really does indicate a need for quality advice for patients who are taking warfarin, and pharmacists with the NMS service are well placed to deliver it.

Reference: SM Moran, N Fitzgerald, M Pope, M Madden, CJ Vaughan (2011) Irish Journal of Medical Science Dec 2011;180(4):819-822

Targeted MURs

NHS Plymouth are planning to support implementation of respiratory MURs this Spring, starting with asthma. We have been working with the Primary Care Team and the pharmaceutical industry to design appropriate training and resources, and are really excited that Jon Bell will be coming down and running several sessions on the importance of the correct inhaler technique, in his usual inimitable style. There will be a number of day time sessions to which pharmacists will be invited if they are able, and also an evening session on the 15th March at the Boringdon Park Conference Centre, specifically for the respiratory MURs. Details on our events page of the website. www.devonlpc.org

Epistatus to Buccolam for paediatric patients

The local specialists have highlighted a potential safety issue while organising the change from epistatus to buccolam. The medication is used by different organisations, for example carers and escorts, and often the boxes are split up by the parents. During local training they are informed of the importance of checking the labelling before administration, therefore we have been asked to encourage pharmacies to label individual tubes for patient safety reasons.

Ten Torbay Pharmacies Test over 130 People for Diabetes Risk

During October pharmacies in Torbay were asked to promote the Diabetes UK Risk Score Assessment as part of a Torbay Care Trust health promotion activity. The pharmacy health promotion champions received training in Diabetes, and how to use the assessment tool. The Diabetes assessment tool graded the risk of the person developing diabetes, and promoted healthy living conversations in the pharmacies.

Results:

- **10 Pharmacies were active with the promotion using the Rick Score Assessment**
- **In total the pharmacies did 138 assessments** – Which I think was fantastic, as this was an average of 14 per pharmacy over two weeks (two pharmacies did over 23 each).
- **16 people were referred to their GP who assessed at being as high risk.** The pharmacies will have really made a difference for these patients – well done!

A big thank you to all the pharmacies that took part in the activity, and well done!

Healthy Living Pharmacy Pilot - Applications Sent Out To Pharmacies

On Friday 6th of January all pharmacies in Plymouth were posted the application forms for participation in the Healthy Living Pharmacy Pilot. The activity on this fantastic project will really pick up over the next few months as we launch the Health Promotion Champions and the Pharmacy Leads training events, so please take a look at the details see below, and hold the dates.

Pharmacy Health Promotion Champions Training (1 Day Event):

Tuesday 28th February, All day event Or Thursday 8th March, All day event

Pharmacy Leads, Leadership Training (2 Evenings):

Wednesday 7th March, Evening event and Wednesday 28th March, Evening event

Is Healthy Living Pharmacy A Model For Future Funding?

The Pharmacy and Public Health Forum members set out their work plan priorities in October 2011 and there was little surprise to see Healthy Living Pharmacies as the number 1 priority. Chair Professor Richard Parish (Chief Executive of the Royal Society for Public Health) said that "The role of community pharmacy has never been more important and, from a public health perspective, they will become even more essential with every year that passes".

Recently, the Forum called for pharmacists to be incentivised in their national contract, to deliver health improvements and promote healthy lifestyles, and that the financial incentives could be linked to the involvement in the healthy living pharmacy development. So therefore it is so import that all the HLP pilot areas deliver positive outcome on their local public health priorities.

Public Health Campaigns

Pharmacies in Devon and Torbay will shortly be receiving information packs about the No Smoking Day public health campaign which will be running over the month of March. Torbay pharmacies are also being asked to focus on lung health – training events have been planned for Torbay Health Promotion Champions on the 24th January and the 1st February, if you have not already booked places for your staff there is still time – even if your pharmacy is not represented at the training, you will still have to participate in the campaign.

DH Market Entry Consultation

The LPC has responded to the Department of Health's consultation pending the laying of new regulations. The LPC has called for a moratorium on exempt applications and for the discontinuation of distance selling exemptions, as well as the 100 hour exemption. The response may be viewed on the LPC website.

Information Governance: Business Continuity Requirement Update

All NHS providers, including community pharmacies, need to provide information governance assurances to the NHS on an annual basis. This is done through the online Information Governance Toolkit. The deadline for contractors to submit their 2011/12 return is the **31st March 2012**.

There are no significant changes to the information governance requirements this year. The Department of Health has confirmed that pharmacies are exempt from requirement 9-319 (business continuity planning) for 2011/12 whilst discussions continue between PSNC and the Department of Health on business continuity planning.

Detailed guidance on the IG requirements may be found on the Information Governance section of the PSNC website <http://www.psn.org.uk/IG>.

Specials – Certificates of Conformity

Anonymised Certificates of Conformity for Torbay, Plymouth and Devon should be sent to;
Helen Baker, 2nd Floor, The Annexe, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QQ

Please also see the links below;

http://www.ppa.org.uk/edt/December_2011/mindex.htm

http://www.psn.org.uk/news.php/1163/reminder_unlicensed_specials_and_imports_guidance

Ordering FP57 And Other Stationery

If a pharmacy wants to order FP57 forms they can send a request to fax number 01392 445431 or email d-pc.pcsstationery@nhs.net

Easter Bank Holiday Opening Hours & Notification of opening intentions on Bank Holidays

Details of Easter Bank Holiday Opening Hours advice from PSNC can be viewed at http://www.psn.org.uk/news.php/1216/easter_bank_holiday_opening_hours

For more information on other bank holidays or pharmacy opening hours, please see the PSNC website www.psn.org.uk/hours

Pharmacy contractors are encouraged to inform their PCT whether their premises will be open on the special days or the Bank Holidays.

Newsletter Launched

A new interactive e-newsletter has been launched called "The Month" from NHS Devon, Plymouth and Torbay cluster, and is designed to keep the public, patients and stakeholders informed about the very latest developments in the local NHS.

The newsletter will be issued monthly via email, but will also be available online at; http://www.devonpct.nhs.uk/Communications/The_month.aspx

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