



# Caring for Care Homes **NHS** Plymouth

The newsletter for Care Home staff, General Practitioners and Community Pharmacists within NHS Plymouth

Issue 2

March 2011

Welcome to the second issue of the Caring for Care Homes Newsletter.

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce the 'Best Practice Ordering Process' for Care Homes, GPs and Pharmacies'.

In Plymouth we have received some significant event reports involving repeat prescriptions for Care Home patients (one of which led to a death). This has resulted in a review of the repeat ordering process across the city to assist in preventing future errors.

The Care Homes Steering Group has been working collaboratively with Care Home Managers, GP Practices and Pharmacies to produce best practice guidance. We are pleased to announce this has now been agreed and is ready for circulation and implementation.

For your convenience, the guidance has been presented in a process flowchart. The relevant flowchart has been printed on the reverse of this newsletter for you to display in a prominent position at your premises.

It has been recognised that one of the most vulnerable steps in a Care Home monthly medication ordering process is incorporating mid cycle medication changes. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure these changes are reconciled correctly. By working together we can improve the care of this vulnerable group of patients.

For the majority of Care Homes, GPs and Pharmacies, changes will be minor when implementing this process. We would ask that all parties review their current procedures in line with these new processes and ensure all stages are carried out in a timely manner to avoid unnecessary delay to the patient's treatment.

Part of the process which may involve a change for some, is the Care Home being responsible for ordering and checking the repeat prescriptions **before** the Pharmacy receives them for dispensing. This is a vital part of the process and by the Care Home checking the prescription details before the Pharmacy receives them and making sure all appropriate medication have full specific dose instructions, any issues and problems can be clarified with the prescriber before the dispensing process begins.

#### **Key points for Care Homes:**

- Check current medication stocks before ordering.
- Check all storage areas, especially for as required medications, dressings, continence products etc.
- It is good practice to ensure that no more than one month's supply of as required medications, dressings and continence products etc are kept.

#### **Key points for GP Practices & Pharmacies:**

- Pharmacies and GP Practices are asked to check prescriptions orders against the patients PMR (Patient Medication Record) enabling this important checking process to continue through all stages of the process.

Please remember, any queries and discrepancies must always be checked with the prescriber and information communicated to the relevant parties.

We would like to thank you in advance and we look forward to continuing to work with you for the best interest of this group of patients.

## Care Home monthly medication ordering request Pharmacy process

### **Glossary of terms**

FP10 - Green side of a prescription  
Repeat slip - White side of a prescription  
MAR – Medication administration record  
PMR – Patient's medication record  
SOP – Standard operating procedure

**Remember:** Check carefully for changes that may have been made mid-cycle as they are often contributing factors in medication errors.

