

To: All community pharmacies in Plymouth

13th September 2011

Dear Colleague,

Re: NPSA Patient Safety Alert: The adult patient's passport to safer use of insulin

The Insulin Passports and patient information booklets are now being distributed by practices. They are being issued at patients' routine diabetic review over the next 6 to 9 months. Patients will not be called in specifically to issue the information and, at this stage, if a patient does not yet have a passport please do not suggest they book an extra appointment with their GP. The deadline for the actions under this alert to be completed is not until 31st August 2012.

Once the passports are in use, pharmacists will be able to cross-reference the information in the passport to confirm the correct identity of insulin products when dispensing.

Derriford Hospital will be issuing the passports to all patients initiated on insulin and supporting patients to amend their passports where they change a prescribed insulin.

Background

A review of the National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS) for the period 1 November 2003 to 1 November 2009 identified 16,600 incidents including six deaths and 12 resulting in severe harm. Patients being prescribed or dispensed the wrong insulin product accounted for 14 per cent of incidents. The aim of this Alert is to improve patient safety by empowering patients as they take an active role in their treatment with insulin. This will be achieved with a patient information booklet and a patient-held record (the Insulin Passport) which documents the patient's current insulin products and enables a safety check for prescribing, dispensing and administration.

The alert closes on 31st August 2012. Full details of the alert are available at:

<http://www.nrls.npsa.nhs.uk/resources/?EntryId45=130397>

With kind regards

Oksana Riley
Medicines Management Adviser