



Medicine Matters

The Newsletter for Care Homes



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Issue 12

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Welcome to our newsletter discussing Medicines Optimisation issues in Care Homes (MOCH).



Welcome to the Frimley ICS Medicines Optimisation in Care Homes (MOCH) newsletter focusing on medicines related issues in care homes. This newsletter is compiled by the Frimley ICS MOCH team and contains items that will be of interest to care home staff, managers and nurses.

The Medicines Optimisation in Care Homes (MOCH) team work to support care home residents and care homes across the Frimley ICS region in medicines management related issues and medication review. It is an exciting and growing service that will be linked with others in the local primary care networks. The service will support care homes by providing good practice guidance and with projects which will benefit care homes, staff and residents.

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COVID19 Pandemic: Medicines Re-use Schemes in Care Homes

[National guidance](#) was published on 28th April 2020 by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) together with NHS England and NHS Improvement regarding the re-use of medicines in Care Homes and Hospices during the [pandemic](#).

DHSC advise against the re-use or recycling of another patient's medicines as the quality and safety of any medicine that has left the pharmacy cannot be guaranteed. Unused medicines are normally disposed of by returning them to a licensed waste disposal company or community pharmacy.

There are increasing concerns about the pressure that could be placed on the medicines' supply chain during peaks in the COVID-19 pandemic. A medicines re-use scheme for care homes and hospices could potentially ease some of that pressure. By re-using medicines in accordance with the guidance, we aim to ensure everyone receives their prescribed medicines.

Medicines re-use schemes are for medicines where there are known problems with obtaining a supply, or where the current supply process is not quick enough to respond to the immediate care needed for an individual person. **It should be used as a last resort where other options in place have been explored and exhausted.**

Guidance for care homes within the Frimley ICS area and those working with care homes can be found here:

<https://www.frimleyccg.nhs.uk/policies-and-documents/medicines-optimisation/care-homes/covid-19>

PRINCIPLES OF A MEDICINES RE-USE SCHEME

1. The care home chooses whether or not to opt into operating a medicines re-use scheme; it is advisable to do so.
2. The scheme is time limited and applies to the period of emergency during the COVID-19 pandemic only.
3. **A medicine must only be utilised through the scheme in a medicines supply crisis.**
4. The scheme applies to ANY medicine only when:
 - medicine is out of stock AND there is no suitable alternative medicine
 - the current medicine supply process is not quick enough to respond to the immediate care needs of an individual person AND
 - the benefit of re-using a medicine outweighs the risk of the person not receiving a medicine
5. It applies only to medicines that are no longer needed by the person for whom they were originally prescribed. Medicines must not be "borrowed" or "shared".
6. The medicine being re-used must be authorised as suitable by a registered Health Care Professional e.g. Nurse, Pharmacy Technician, Pharmacist, Community Nurse or GP
7. The medicine for re-use must stay and be stored within the same care home.
8. The care home must risk assess and keep a robust audit trail for any re-used medicine.
9. A prescription must be provided for that resident to the care home before a medicine can be considered for re-use. The prescription in effect replaces the medicine label. The prescription must be retained by the care home for audit trail purposes.
10. The re-use of any medicine as part of the scheme must always be safe and in the person's best interests.

If you need further support or information contact the MOCH team directly by phone or e-mail (contact details on page 1) or email frimleyccg.MOCH@nhs.net with any queries.

Good Practice Guidance

The MOCH team at Frimley CCG have been writing new and reviewing existing Good Practice Guidance (GPG) for Care Homes.

GPGs and other resources have recently been added to the Care Homes section on the Frimley CCG website, [Care Homes \(frimleyccg.nhs.uk\)](https://www.frimleyccg.nhs.uk).

GPGs include:

- Controlled Drugs
- Supporting people to self-care in care homes
- Over the counter medicines and homely remedies
- EMIS proxy
- Medicines management
 - Administration of creams and ointments
 - Medicines storage
 - Flu vaccines
 - Fridge temperature monitoring



Additional other resources are:

- MOCH resources (Structured Medication Review/Referral to MOCH team)
- Care homes newsletter (recent editions of newsletters)

Winter vaccinations

COVID-19 Vaccination

Help protect yourself, your family, friends and residents by ensuring staff and residents have had their COVID-19 vaccination. As per the Government's latest announcement, the NHS is providing a booster dose to:

- everyone aged 18 years old and over
- people aged 16 years old and over with a severely weakened immune system

The booster dose can be booked after 2 months (61 days) after the 2nd dose.

All care home staff can get their COVID-19 booster vaccine by:

- booking online via the [National Booking System](#) or,
- calling 119.

Care home residents who have not had their COVID-19 vaccination and/or booster dose must be highlighted to their GP as a matter of urgency.



Flu vaccination

The flu virus can lead to serious complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia and can be deadly for staff and residents. This year getting the flu vaccine is particularly important because:

- more people are likely to get flu this winter as fewer people will have built up natural immunity to it during the COVID-19 pandemic
- if you get flu and COVID-19 at the same time, research shows you're more likely to be seriously ill
- getting vaccinated against flu and COVID-19 will provide protection for you and those around you for both these serious illnesses.

As a health care worker, you are eligible for a free flu vaccine. This year community can vaccinate care home residents and staff through NHS pharmacy services. More information on flu vaccines can be found [here](#)

Any residents who have not had their flu vaccine must be highlighted to their GPs.

Please encourage all visitors to your care home to get their flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccines to help protect their loved ones.