

MEDICINES MATTER

MOCH TEAM NEWSLETTER – MAY 2024

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Preparing for summer months

Most of us welcome hot weather, but when it is too hot there are health risks in certain groups of people. Hot weather can cause urinary tract infections and confusion due to dehydration, which can result in unnecessary hospital admissions. Here are some 'top tips' for helping your residents cope in hot weather.

- Try to stay out of the sun between 11am and 3pm as it is the hottest part of the day.
- Offer cool baths or showers or a cool towel.
- Encourage residents to drink cold drinks that they enjoy regularly. Reduce tea, coffee, and alcohol, or switch to decaffeinated teas/coffees if that is the resident's drink of choice.
- Offer ice lollies and ice cream which can help residents keep cool and provide nutrition.
- Identify the coolest room in the home so you know where residents can go to keep cool. If this is not possible then think about keeping blinds/curtains lowered.
- Encourage residents to wear loose, cool clothing and a hat if they go outdoors.
- Ensure a high SPF sunscreen is applied regularly.
- Medication should be stored below 25°C and fridge temperatures should be kept between 2°C and 8°C. Regular temperature monitoring should take place, especially during the summer months. Refer to our Good Practice Guidance on Medicines' Storage [here](#) and Fridge Temperature Monitoring [here](#).
- Can you involve activity co-ordinators to think about making the sun fun for residents but enjoying it safely?
- Has the care home identified the residents most at risk of dehydration? Certain medications may increase dehydration such as diuretics, laxatives and blood pressure medication. Is your care home aware of the Good Hydration in Care Homes resources that can be accessed [here](#)?
- Think back to the Hydration Training sessions and increase the number of structured drinks rounds in the summer months.
- Do care staff know how to support a resident if they are hot at night?

Please make sure that both staff and residents are drinking enough to stay hydrated.

Good Practice Guidance

New GPG on Discharge Prescriptions – queries or concerns can be found [here](#).

New GPG on Handling of medication errors, incidents, near misses or concerns in care homes can be found [here](#). Includes word and PDF documents for reporting and learning from a medicines related patient safety incident form [here](#).

New GPGs will be published soon so keep your eyes peeled! Lots of other GPGs and useful resources can be found [here](#).

Nourishing Drink recipes for warmer months

Yoghurt and berry smoothie (Makes 1 smoothie)

Ingredients

- 150mls whole milk
- 150mls Greek yoghurt
- 2 tablespoons (18g) skimmed milk powder.
- 1 cup (50g) fresh or frozen strawberries, raspberries, or blueberries

Method Place all ingredients in a blender and liquidise until smooth.

Estimated to provide: 300Kcal, 17g protein.



Oreo milkshake (Makes 1 milkshake)

Ingredients

- 200mls whole milk
- 2 tablespoons (18g) skimmed milk powder.
- 2 scoops (20g) ice cream
- 2 Oreo biscuits

Method Place all ingredients in a blender and liquidise until smooth. Serve chilled.

Estimated to provide: 350Kcal, 14g protein.



Recipes approved by Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Dietitians

Medicines Safety Corner: Patient Safety Alert- Oxygen Cylinders

You may have some residents prescribed oxygen as part of their treatment. Oxygen is provided in cylinders and the design of these cylinders has changed in recent years. Cylinders with integral valves are now in common use and require a few steps to be carried out first before oxygen starts to flow. These steps can include:

- Removing a plastic cap
- Adjusting a dial
- Turning a valve

A Patient Safety Alert published in January 2018 (accessed [here](#)) stated that due to the design changes, it has been reported that healthcare staff were not aware of the multiple steps. Staff have also reported there was no clear indicator on the valve to show if a valve was open or closed, therefore staff may believe oxygen is flowing when it is not.

Make sure:

- An oxygen care plan is in place for residents prescribed oxygen. A care plan and the medicines administration record must include:
 - The reason why oxygen is prescribed
 - Who it has been prescribed by
 - The prescribed flow rate
 - The duration of oxygen needed and the device used
 - Details of target oxygen saturations
 - Escalation plans in case of clinical deterioration
- Ensure staff are trained and competent to operate oxygen cylinders. If there are changes in the resident's oxygen cylinder design or functionalities, care providers must make sure staff members are aware of the changes and understand how to operate the oxygen cylinders safely.
- To reduce the risk of fire, the cylinder valve must be closed when not in use. Make sure a risk assessment has taken place and this should be reviewed yearly and recorded in the care plan.

For further guidance on the use of oxygen, please see the CQC guidance for providers, Managing oxygen in care homes [here](#).

NHS 111 – Interactive Voice Response (IVR)

A regional Interactive Voice Response (IVR) will shortly be switched on for NHS 111, this change will affect the way Health Care Professionals (including lab technicians) access 111 on behalf of a patient. This is to standardise the IVR options across England to deliver a consistent user experience.

Where the user calls 111, there will be preset options. This will be live from 10am on 1st May 2024.

Health Care Professionals will need to select 3 for Health Care Professionals; upon selecting 3 there will be 3 options:

1. Ambulance Crews
2. **CARE HOMES**
3. Health care professionals

The following prompts will be given when you call 111:

If your call is about physical health press 1.
If your call is about mental health press 2.
If you are a healthcare professional or lab technician press 3



You have selected the health care professional line, please only continue to hold if you are a healthcare professional or lab technician and are calling on behalf of a patient, otherwise please press 1.



If you are an ambulance crew press 1.
If you are calling from a care home press 2.
If you are a healthcare professional or lab technician press 3

Please note: The current 111 phone lines will continue to work for the time being alongside the new IVR.