

Care About Medicine

Medicines information for staff in a social care setting

Welcome to the seventh issue of **Care About Medicine** newsletter.

This newsletter aims to provide useful information and guidance about medicines that may be helpful to anyone working within a social care setting.

Please contact us if you have any problems or issues concerning medication including safe storage, handling and administration, as well as advice on documentation, policies and procedures. We can also offer advice on medicine training issues and competency assessments.

You can get in touch by contacting:

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New Quality Standard from NICE

In December 2013 NICE published its 50th quality standard 'Mental wellbeing of older people in care homes' (QS50). This standard covers the mental wellbeing of older people (65 years and over) receiving care in all care home settings, including residential and nursing accommodation, day care and respite care.

More than 400,000 older people currently live in care homes, a figure set to rise given the UK's ageing population (by 2035 people aged 65 and over will account for 23% of the total population^[1]).

While many older people in care homes are well looked after, a few recent high-profile cases have highlighted instances of substandard care, which suggests standards can vary.

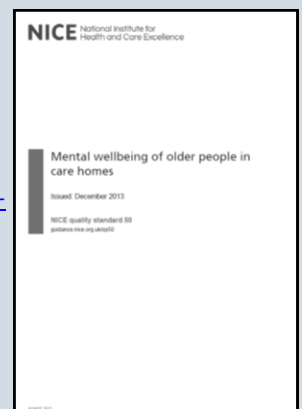
A reason for this is the prevalence of mental health issues among older people, which can often complicate

care. With loneliness, depression and low levels of life satisfaction widespread among residents in care homes, it can be hard for staff to offer the support they need.

NICE's 50th quality standard on the mental wellbeing of older people in care homes aims to address these issues through six measurable statements.

The quality standard can be viewed on the NICE website at: <http://publications.nice.org.uk/mental-wellbeing-of-older-people-in-care-homes-qs50>

^[1] Office for National Statistics (2012) [Census 2011](#)



The National Care Forum (NCF) has led on the development of a comprehensive resource pack to enable care service providers to improve medicines management, help residents to understand their rights, and to develop safer working practices so that medicines are administered more safely and drug errors are reduced. The free resources can be downloaded from:

<http://www.nationalcareforum.org.uk/>

Community Pharmacy

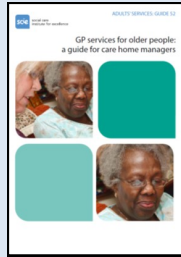
Your local pharmacy can not only provide your residents monthly medicines but also offer valuable advice and information relating to all aspects of medicines management.

Ensuring you develop a good relationship and communication link is vital to getting the most out of what your pharmacy has to offer. Communication is especially important if you experience any problems or concerns with the service they provide you.

If you feel that you still have concerns even after communicating with the pharmacy please feel free to contact us (details above) and we will endeavour to help resolve them.

GP services for older people: a guide for care home managers

In December 2013 the social care institute for excellence (scie) published guidance for managers and senior staff in care homes on accessing GP services.



The health and wellbeing of older people in care homes depends on them accessing GP services in a timely way. Effective joint working between GP and care home management, the involvement of residents and their relatives and the engagement of care staff are factors that can affect the outcome and lead to quality improvements.

The purpose of the guide is to support managers and staff of care homes to work in partnership with GPs and primary care teams, with a view to improving access for residents to good medical services. It seeks to place the resident at the centre of the picture, viewing from their perspective the need for, and benefits of, effective joint working between the home manager and the GP.

The guidance can be viewed on scie's website at:

<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide52/>

Helpful links

The following websites can provide information for carer's and service users.

For what's happening around the county, visit the following websites:

www.mansfieldanddashfieldccg.nhs.uk

www.newarkandsherwood.nhs.uk

www.nottinghamnortheastccg.nhs.uk

www.nottinghamwestccg.nhs.uk

www.rushcliffeccg.nhs.uk

www.bassetlawccg.nhs.uk

www.nottinghamcity.nhs.uk

For information on medication issues please contact your local community pharmacy.

For advice on specific conditions visit: www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

For the latest information and guidance for care issues: www.cqc.org.uk

Emollients - Keeping service users safe from fire

Several fatal fires in England have occurred recently relating to lit cigarettes and other household items (hot hairdryers) coming into contact with pressure relieving mattresses (see MHRA medical device alert dated 10th October 2013)



Following on from this, guidance has been released from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Services (www.manchesterfire.gov.uk) relating to fire prevention when using one of these mattresses.

One other area that is covered in the guidance is the use of emollients. Emollient creams are moisturising treatments applied directly to the skin. They are often used to treat dry skin conditions such as eczema. They reduce water loss from the skin by covering it with a protective film and use of emollient creams is common amongst people who spend extended periods of time in bed or are bedbound due to illness and impaired mobility.

Individuals using paraffin-based emollients should be advised to keep away from fire or flames as dressings and clothing soaked with the ointment can be easily ignited. Bedding, including bottom sheets, can become impregnated with emollient creams, therefore increasing its flammability.

Individuals who smoke should be made aware of the added fire risk associated with smoking and using emollient creams.

If a service user smokes and uses paraffin-based emollients and therefore is at an increased risk it may be worthwhile talking to the service users pharmacist and GP about using a suitable non-flammable alternative.

MHRA Medical Device Alerts (MDAs) - please note: CQC do not distribute these alerts. Independent healthcare providers and social care providers can sign up to receive MDAs directly from the Department of Health's Central Alerting System (CAS) by sending an email to: safetyalerts@dh.gsi.gov.uk and requesting this facility.

National Care Home Open Day — 20th June 2014

On June 20th thousands of care homes will open their doors to welcome the public, connect communities and change perceptions.

Is your Care Home taking part?

Lets create some positive noise about care homes

Visit www.nationalcarehomeopenday.org.uk to find out more information

We prefer to send this newsletter out by email but recently many emails have been returned as undeliverable as the email addresses appear to be out of date.

If you don't currently receive this newsletter by email please forward your details to Georgina at

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