



Care Home News



HWEICB Social Care Integration team

Issue 3 December 2023

- HCPA webinars
- Medicines Reconciliation
- Winter wellness
- Fridge out of range temperature guidance

HCPA webinar update

It has been great to see so many of you attending our webinars in partnership with the HCPA. For those that could not attend or want to revisit the webinars, the recordings and copies of the presentation slides will soon be accessible on the HCPA members' zone medication page on the following link

[Medication past webinar resources | HCPA](#)

Medicines Reconciliation

Following a number of recent medication errors the ICB care home pharmacy team would like to ask care home managers and clinical leads to remind staff about the importance of accurate 'medicines reconciliation' when residents come into a care home.

- ◆ All care homes should have a medication policy that includes how to undertake medicines reconciliation, which is the process of accurately listing a resident's medicines. Medicines reconciliation should take place when a person is discharged from hospital or transferred from another setting or place of residence (including home), when treatment has changed and ideally before the first dose of a medication is administered
- ◆ Medicines reconciliation must be undertaken by appropriately trained staff, who are competent to carry this out, including the double check
- ◆ The most up to date reliable source should be used and wherever possible cross checked against an alternative source. Any discrepancies must be recorded and reason(s) established. If the information on a hospital discharge summary/ medication labels/ prescription request paperwork does not match, contact the hospital or community pharmacy to seek clarification
- ◆ Do not use any medication that is not labelled, including when there are no directions on how to take the medicine on the dispensing label- please contact the pharmacy for advice
- ◆ Minimise distractions when carrying out medicines reconciliation

Here is a link to a good practice guide on medicines reconciliation which covers how to manage the process: [care-homes-good-practice-guidance-medicines-reconciliation \(icb.nhs.uk\)](https://www.icb.nhs.uk/care-homes-good-practice-guidance-medicines-reconciliation)

Measuring liquid oral medication

Please take care when measuring liquid oral medication especially if the dose is less than 5ml. For doses that are less than 5ml please ensure that you have an oral syringe closest in size to the dose being measured (1ml, 2.5ml and 5ml oral syringes are available). Using a bottle adaptor/bung with the oral syringe helps measure more accurately. Oral syringes and bottle adaptors/bungs should be supplied by your community pharmacist with every supply of medication when the dose required is less than 5ml.



Winter wellness

Vitamin D

Vitamin D helps regulate the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body. These nutrients are needed for healthy bones, teeth, and muscles. Too little vitamin D can lead to bone pain and muscle weakness in adults, which may also increase the risk of falls in older people. Although our bodies make vitamin D when skin is exposed to summer sunlight (April to September), in the UK this is variable. [Public Health England](#) have advised that the entire UK population is at risk of low vitamin D status and should take a supplement in the winter months and those living in care settings should take a supplement year-round.

HWEICB does not support the prescribing of vitamin D supplements (10 micrograms/400-unit dose) to treat insufficiency. [CQC](#) state that *Care home providers are required to meet residents full nutritional needs to sustain life and good health and reduce the risk of malnutrition . In addition to the provision of nutritious meals, this includes food supplement's where necessary such as Vitamin D'*. Care homes are required to purchase and provide suitable Vitamin D supplements, these can include tablets, sprays, or liquid.

[DHSC guidance](#) circulated with the free supplies of vitamin D sent to care homes in 2021 outlines checks that care providers should make before administering vitamin D. If in doubt, check with a healthcare professional e.g., supplying community pharmacist. Any vitamin D given must be recorded, the MAR chart is the most practical option and can be handwritten. All hand written entries should be written in full, dated and signed by two trained members of staff and marked OTC (over the counter).

Due to illness or a poor appetite care home residents may be at risk of malnutrition because they cannot, or do not, eat enough to meet their body's nutritional needs. Malnutrition increases the risk of illness and makes it harder for the body to fight infection and heal itself, so it could take longer to recover from any illness. Malnutrition can also reduce energy levels, muscle strength and mobility. Treating malnutrition can be very simple, and ordinary food can provide all the extra nutrition needed. This is called 'food based' treatment – it just means using ordinary foods to increase the intake of all nutrients.

In the colder months Fortified Hot Chocolate may be a good option for those at risk of malnutrition according to MUST

Fortified hot chocolate (ICS recipe)

Ingredients—makes 1 portion

½ pint/180ml full fat milk

2 generous tablespoons/30g skimmed milk powder

4 heaped teaspoons/20g vitamin fortified chocolate flavour milkshake powder (Aldi Cowbelle Milkshake Mix, Asda Milkshake Mix, Lidl Goody Cao, or Nesquik)

Directions - Mix milk powder and milkshake powder together in a mug. Gradually mix in hot milk and stir well. 1 portion = 220ml



Click [here](#) for the Care home malnutrition pathway

Fridge out of range temperature guidance

In order to ensure that medications are kept at the appropriate temperature, it is important to record the maximum, minimum, and current (actual) temperature of the refrigerator on a daily basis. The thermometer must be **reset** after each reading is taken.

The fridge temperature must be kept between the range of **2°C to 8°C**. If the temperature is outside this range action should be taken immediately, please see below:

- ⇒ Inform the manager straight away
- ⇒ Identify and fix any obvious issues e.g., problem with thermometer, partially closed door. Reset thermometer and recheck after 10 minutes. If it returns to range no action is required.
- ⇒ If it still out of range quarantine fridge stock by placing in a bag and label "DO NOT USE", store in a suitable alternative fridge whilst seeking advice.
- ⇒ Place a "DO NOT USE" notice on the faulty fridge with the date and time.
- ⇒ Try to estimate how many hours the fridge has been out of range by looking at the previous days recordings and the maximum and minimum temperatures.
- ⇒ Contact your regular pharmacy or if needed the manufacturer for advice.
- ⇒ If you are informed the medication is not suitable for use then the medication needs to be disposed of in line with your care home policy.
- ⇒ If needed call out an engineer to repair the fridge.
- ⇒ New medication will need to be ordered urgently from your GP making them aware for the reason for an early request.



Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a happy
New Year from all in the care home team



Please send details of any queries /requests for support to the team e-mail address

hweicbenh.pharmacycarehomes@nhs.net Emails are monitored Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm (exc Bank Holidays) and will be triaged to the most appropriate member of the team. Patient identifiable details should **ONLY** be sent from and to secure email addresses (NHS.net to NHS.net). More information, guidance documents & newsletters can be found at our new website (coming soon)

