

To:
RQIA (for circulation to Care Homes &
Hospices)
GPs
OOHs & COVID centres
Community pharmacies
Head of Pharmacy Federations (*for
cascade to GP pharmacists*)
Trust Medical Directors (*for cascade to
Palliative Care clinicians*)
Trust Directors of Nursing (*for cascade to
relevant nursing teams including
community*)
Trust Heads of Pharmacy (*for cascade to
MOOP teams*)

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18th May 2020

Dear Colleague

POLICY FOR ASSESSMENT OF UN-USED PRESCRIBED MEDICINES FOR THE POTENTIAL TO RE-USE IN CARE HOMES (NURSING AND RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES) AND HOSPICES –STOOD DOWN WITH EFFECT FROM 18TH MAY 2020

We are continually assessing the regional arrangements for medicines in care homes (nursing and residential care homes) and hospices during the COVID-19 pandemic. As you will be aware, a number of regional arrangements were put in place to facilitate access to medicines for these settings; this includes the provision of urgent pandemic packs, an expansion of the palliative care network of pharmacies and a policy for the re-use of medicines.

Further to our letter on 20th April 2020, we wish to advise that the Policy for Assessment of Un-used prescribed Medicines for the potential to Re-use in Care Homes (Nursing and Residential Care Homes) AND Hospices is **STOOD DOWN from Monday 18th May 2020**. Initial reports suggest that homes and hospices have had limited need to re-use medicines in line with this policy, given the number of other measures that have been put in place.

We will keep these arrangements under review and write to you should there be a need to reinstate this policy as the COVID-19 pandemic unfolds. It is also planned to evaluate the implementation of the policy and refine for any future use.

ACTIONS

1. Community pharmacies

should facilitate the return of residents' medication from residential care homes and supported living including controlled drugs as part of contracted core services. HSCB have advised Rentokil Initial who hold the current waste management contract accordingly. Since advice is constantly being updated during the pandemic, healthcare workers in various sectors should ensure that they are accessing the most recent advice via FAQs at link below:

<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/3150.htm>

2. Care facilities

- (i) Ensure this change in policy is communicated to all relevant staff.
- (ii) Ensure processes for waste management revert to normal practice with immediate effect. This should include a review of all medicines that had been stored for potential re-use to ensure appropriate disposal
- (iii) Nursing Homes and hospices should arrange for uplift of clinical waste in line with their usual arrangements:

RQIA has issued guidance to nursing homes in relation to the disposal of medicines in the following document:

https://www.rqia.org.uk/RQIA/media/RQIA/Resources/The-Disposal-of-Medicines-in-Nursing-Homes_final_112011.pdf

Supported living/Residential care homes should liaise with their community pharmacy to agree mutually convenient timelines for acceptance of medicines waste for disposal.

- (iv) Only those medicines returned from a suspected, or confirmed, COVID positive patient which were stored in their room need to be quarantined. These medicines should be sealed (double bagged) and quarantined for three days (72 hours) prior to returning to a pharmacy.

Refer to most recent advice via link below.

<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/3150.html>

- (v) Assurance Proforma for care facilities

Complete and return the attached proforma (Appendix 1) to RQIA via email by **18th June 2020**, thus providing an assurance that any controlled drugs retained in line with this policy have now been destroyed as per the individual setting's normal operating procedures.

(vi) Record Keeping for care facilities

In accordance with The Nursing Homes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005, Regulation 19(4) the records pertaining to this policy must be kept for six years.


Care Homes should contact RQIA pharmacy team if they have any queries **028 9536 1111**. Further information can also be obtained by contacting a Pharmacy Adviser in your local HSCB office

Thank you for your ongoing support during these challenging times.

Yours sincerely



Joe Brogan
Assistant Director of Integrated Care
Head of Pharmacy and Medicines
Management



Dr Margaret O'Brien
Assistant Director of Integrated Care
Head of General Medical Services

CC. Paul Turley HSCB
Diane Walker Palliative Care in Partnership Macmillan Programme
Manager
Canice Ward MRG
Cathy Glover RQIA
Rodney Morton PHA
Kathy Fodey PHA
Gillian McCorkell PHA
Loretta Gribben PHA
Gary Cousins PHA
Sandra Aitcheson PHA
Dr Alan McPherson NI Hospice
Palliative Care Pharmacists (Trust & Marie Curie)
CPNI
GPC
Royal College of Nursing (RCN)
PSNI

Enc. Appendix 1

Name of Home

Registration number

I confirm that I have disposed of all controlled drugs that had been retained under the Policy for Assessment of Un-used prescribed Medicines for the potential to Re-use in Care Homes (Nursing and Residential Care Homes) AND Hospices in line with legislation and best practice guidelines. The controlled drug record book has been updated to reflect the disposal/return.

OR

I confirm that no controlled drugs were retained as part of the reuse of medicines policy.
(Delete as appropriate)

Name (Signed & printed):

Date:

Job Title:

Please email a copy of this form to judith.taylor@rqia.org.uk before 18th June 2020.