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Specials – Prescription Endorsement

Background

Analysis of the payments for “Specials” dispensed in January 2015 highlighted an increase in the number of overpayments of non Part 7S items that had previously been authorised. Subsequent investigations showed that many of these overpayments had been made by PSD as a result of the item not being endorsed by community pharmacy staff before submission for payment. If the price is not endorsed, PSD are obliged to obtain prices from other sources which may not reflect the actual cost the contractor has paid for the item.

Advice

All non-Part 7S “Specials” items to be endorsed with the following information before submission to PSD for payment –

- invoice price including any additional cost incurred less discount/rebates (the actual price paid for the product) and excluding VAT - annotated with code “SP” e.g. SP 5200 for an item costing £52.
- any out of pocket expenses

Remember to add these as an electronic special price endorsement for the OOPE in addition to paper endorsement. The invoice, or a legible copy of it, should also be submitted to PSD along with the prescription as evidence of the claim. Submission of an invoice does not remove the requirement for the price endorsement on the prescription. Please **do not** endorse the prescription with the authorisation code issued by GGC. Part 7S or 7U items do not require to be endorsed as they are paid at Tariff rates. Compliance with this guidance will ensure more accurate payments and prevent unnecessary adjustments.

Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

Did you know that April was national Bowel Cancer Awareness Month? Bowel cancer is the third most common cancer in Scotland after lung and breast with almost 4000 people diagnosed each year. Bowel cancer is more common in the over 50s, especially in men. One in 20 of over 50 year olds will develop bowel cancer at some stage in their lives. The great news is that bowel cancer is highly treatable with a 90% chance of treating the disease successfully if found early

Early signs are often hidden which is why bowel screening is so important. It's estimated that the home screening test prevents 150 cancers each year in Scotland.

As a legacy from Bowel Cancer Awareness why not continue to raise awareness of the importance of home screening:

- Create a bowel Cancer Awareness Month display in your pharmacy. Leaflets and posters can be ordered from Public Health Resource Directory: www.phrd.scot.nhs.uk
- Ask eligible customers (men and women aged 50-70) if they have received their screening kit. Every pharmacy will have received pre-printed prescription bags with key bowel screening messages – use these as a prompt to ask about screening.
- Signpost customers to the national bowel screening helpline if they have any questions about the screening kit and how to complete it: **0800 0121 833**

Codeine for cough and cold: restricted use in children

Recent guidance from the MHRA advises that codeine containing medicines are not to be used in children under 12 as it is associated with a risk of respiratory side effects related to opiate toxicity. Codeine is also not recommended in adolescents (12 to 18) who have problems breathing

When prescribing or dispensing codeine containing medicines for coughs and colds please consider that

- Codeine is contraindicated in
 - children younger than 12 years old
 - patients of any age known to be CYP2D6 ultra-rapid metabolisers of codeine into morphine
 - breastfeeding mothers
- codeine is not recommended for adolescents (12 to 18) who have problems with breathing
- report suspected side effects on the Yellow card scheme (26 reports received on respiratory side effects in children due to codeine up to August 2104)

Opioid Replacement Therapy (ORT) Stamps

Prescription stamps for methadone and Suboxone have been designed for use by Addiction Teams and Drug Services across NHS GGC. These stamps have been designed to support Medical & Non –Medical Prescribers in Addiction Services who handwrite ORT scripts. The stamps have been approved by the Health Board and the Controlled Drug (CD) Governance Team. The stamps use black ink and act as a template for prescribers to complete.

The wording on each stamp outlines CD prescription requirements for instalment dispensing and prescribers have been instructed to write the total quantity in words & figures and clearly state instalment amount & interval. The following are examples of the stamp templates:

Start Date:.....	Start Date:.....
Methadone Oral Solution 1mg/ml	Suboxonemg/..... Tablets
Total Quantity:.....	Total Quantity:.....
Dose:.....	Dose:.....
Supply:.....	Supply:.....
Supervised on day of collection	Supervised on day of collection

Please contact the NHS GGC Addiction Pharmacy Team at Possilpark Health & Care Centre on 0141 800 0660 should you have any queries regarding use of these stamps

Labelling Standards of Children's Medicines

Concerns have been expressed by staff at Robin House, the Children's Hospice at Balloch, on the standard of labelling of children's medicines dispensed by community pharmacists and being taken into the Hospice when the child is admitted. Although children come to Robin House from other health board areas, a large proportion that use Robin House have their medicines dispensed by community pharmacies in NHS GGC.

Examples of problems caused by inappropriate labelling include:

- **Labels attached to the outer packaging rather than the actual container** - This outer packaging is often discarded once the bottle is opened resulting in no instructions being available on the prescribed dose to be administered by hospice staff. This frequently causes problems on admission as the medicines are left unlabelled. It may also lead to administration errors in the community due to the absence of accurate dosing information.
- **Labels placed over expiry dates** – causes problems on admission as the dispensing label has to be peeled back in order to check the expiry date. Situations have arisen where parents have been administering medications at home unaware they had expired due to the label covering the expiry date.
- **Labels placed over important information** – e.g. Labels placed over details of reduced expiry on opening. There are cases where parents were unaware that a medicine had expired because this information was obscured. Parents express concern that their pharmacist has never highlighted this information to them before.

- **Labelling of medications broken down from bulk** – Children are more likely to be dispensed smaller volumes of liquid medicines which have been broken down from bulk and dispensed in amber bottles. Often no expiry date is stated on these dispensed medicines, e.g. where Oramorph 10mg/5mL oral solution has been decanted from bulk and no information has been added to the bottle to indicate that the shelf-life has reduced after opening.

Covert Administration of Medication

What is Covert Administration of Medication?

Covert medication is the administration of any medical treatment in a disguised form. As a result the person is unknowingly taking medication. This is only legally justifiable under conditions clearly defined in the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 and must **never** be applied to someone who is capable of making decisions about their medical treatment.

How does it work in practice?

A medical practitioner (or sometimes another healthcare practitioner) assesses the adult's capacity in relation to the treatment decision in question. If the individual lacks capacity, a certificate of incapacity under section 47 of the Act is issued. Where covert administration is being considered the certificate must specify the treatment to be given covertly (not necessarily all treatments as the person may be willing to accept some medicines). A certificate is normally valid for one year, but can be valid for up to three in certain cases. Multiple interventions should be accompanied by a treatment plan. The Mental Welfare Commission has developed legal and practical guidance for covert administration and the [Covert Medication Care Pathway](#) should then be followed. Treatment plans must be regularly reviewed and any new prescriptions assessed individually for suitability for covert administration.

What is the pharmacist's role?

When covert administration is appropriate, pharmacist input is essential to specify the best method of achieving administration and identify any risks involved. It is not the role of the pharmacist to sanction the use of covert medication. However, suggesting stopping unnecessary medication may be appropriate. Where the formulation of a medicine is altered e.g. by crushing tablets or mixing with food or drink, the medicine is then being used outwith the product license. Reliable sources of information such as the NEWT guidelines should be used when giving advice on methods of administration.

What records should be kept?

The NHSGGC Care Home Pharmaceutical Care Group require pharmaceutical advice to be recorded and retained by the pharmacist, GP practice or care home (where relevant) to support an effective audit trail. This is in line with General Pharmaceutical Council and Royal Pharmaceutical Society recommendations that pharmacists document their interventions and maintain records. A locally developed template for community pharmacists to record advice given to support covert administration of medication is available [here](#). Individual companies may have alternative documentation.

Vitamin E provision for Cystic Fibrosis patients

Patients with Cystic Fibrosis are advised to take Vitamin E as they cannot absorb fat-soluble vitamins due to pancreatic insufficiency. The Cystic Fibrosis Trust recommends that adult Cystic Fibrosis patients take around 100mg of Vitamin E daily (100mg vitamin E = 150units vitamin E) in order to maintain adequate Vitamin E levels. The regular prescription is Vitamin E 200 unit (134mg) capsules, one capsule in the morning with food. Most patients will receive their Vitamin E capsules from community pharmacy prescribed by their GP.

Product	Unit Strength	Pack Size	Price per Pack	Price per Cap	Price for Daily Dose	Price per year	PSD Blacklisted?
Valupak Vitamin E 100unit capsules (BR Pharmaceuticals Ltd) 30 capsule	100unit	30	59p	1.97p	3.9p	1404	No
*Solgar Natural Vitamin E 200unit capsules (Solgar Vitamin and Herb) 250 capsule	200unit	250	1114p	4.5p	4.5p	1620	No
Solgar Natural Vitamin E 200unit capsules (Solgar Vitamin and Herb) 50 capsule	200unit	50	287p	5.7p	5.7p	2052	No
Premier Vitamin E 200unit capsules (Premier Health Products Ltd) 90 capsule	200 unit	90	595p	6.6p	6.6p	2376	No
Power Health Vitamin E 200unit capsules (Power Health Products Ltd) 100 capsule	200 unit	100	660p	6.6p	6.6p	2376	No
*Solgar Dry Vitamin E 200unit capsules (Solgar Vitamin and Herb) 50 capsule	200unit	50	361p	7.2p	7.2p	2592	No
Premier Vitamin E 200unit capsules (Premier Health Products Ltd) 30 capsule	200 unit	30	225p	7.5p	7.5p	2700	No

*(Previous Price, current unknown)

There are other Vitamin E preparations available which can also be prescribed to Cystic Fibrosis patients including the licensed product, Vitamin E 100mg/ml but this tends to be unpalatable.

Cystic Fibrosis patients are also advised to take Vitamin A and Vitamin D supplements in order to optimise fat soluble vitamin levels.

What do community pharmacists need to do when dispensing Vitamin E?

There is a standard procedure for dispensing unlicensed specials in community pharmacy and community pharmacists are advised to follow this procedure. Some brands of Vitamin E are blacklisted but if prescribed generically, it can be dispensed by the pharmacy providing the brand is not endorsed on the script i.e. endorse with price only! Blacklisted brands include Lamberts, Nature's Aid and HealthAid products.

Contacts

Cystic Fibrosis Specialist Pharmacists - Iona Paterson and Alison Orr tel: 0141 211 3000, page 5340 (note this number may change once the service moves to the New South Glasgow University Hospitals)

Primary care contact is the Central Prescribing Team 0141 201 5157