



Press Release

For Immediate Release: 11 January 2012

Patients to benefit as new processes help pharmacists know if prescriptions have changed while in hospital

New guidance was published today showing how the New Medicine Service (NMS) and post discharge Medicines Use Reviews (MURs) can be used to provide a seamless care pathway for patients who transfer from hospital to the community setting.

It has been developed and published by the NHS Employers organisation and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee (PSNC) working with a hospital and community pharmacy reference group. The guidance has been endorsed by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS).

Hospitals and community pharmacists can use the support tools to formalise how they share information about changes to patients' prescriptions. This will help ensure patients get the right medicines and the most value from them when they transfer care, as well as potentially reduce the risk of hospital readmissions.

To support the transfer of care a national referral form has been developed that can, with patient consent, be used by hospitals and pharmacists to transfer patient information.

There is a clear need for greater joint working between hospital colleagues and community pharmacy and there are some good examples of effective joint working, but the new national referral form is designed to embed, improve and mainstream this good practice.

The New Medicine Service and targeted Medicines Use Reviews were introduced on 1 October 2011 and aim to enhance patients' understanding and adherence to their medicines. It is important that hospital clinicians now increase their understanding of the NMS and MURs so they can refer patients into these services.

Alongside the national referral form the following documents are launched today:

- a patient information leaflet about the benefits of community pharmacy entitled *Leaving hospital? Find out how your local chemist can help*
- a guidance document for community pharmacy about engaging with hospital colleagues entitled *Working with hospital colleagues to support patients discharged from hospital*
- a guidance document for hospital colleagues about engaging with community pharmacy entitled *Community pharmacy services*

Keith Ridge, chief pharmaceutical officer at the Department of Health said:

"These documents are a practical way to help community pharmacists and hospital colleagues make sure that the patient's medication regime and any information they are given is consistent during the transfer of care. They will help underpin a safe and beneficial approach to MURs and NMS provided to patients post discharge."

Alastair Buxton, Head of NHS Services at PSNC said:

"Providing seamless care for patients transferring from hospital is a top priority for the NHS, and the NMS and post-discharge MURs allow community pharmacists to support patients with their transition back into the community. Provision of the services requires local team working between primary and secondary care, which many LPCs and PCTs are keen to support. These resources should assist with local discussions on the services which in turn should help enhance relationships between hospital and community pharmacy colleagues."

Heidi Wright, English Practice & Policy Lead at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, said:

"We are delighted to support this initiative which supports referral between hospital and community pharmacy colleagues. This fits particularly well with our early adopter

programme on 'Keeping patients safe when they transfer between care providers – getting the medicines right.'"⁽¹⁾

ENDS

Editor's notes:

- ⁽¹⁾ More information at <http://www.rpharms.com/toc>
- More information about the new processes:
<http://www.nhsemployers.org/PayAndContracts/CommunityPharmacyContract/Pages/PCC-CommunityPharmacyContractualArrangements.aspx> or www.psnco.org.uk
- PSNC promotes and supports the interests of all NHS community pharmacies in England. We are recognised by the Secretary of State for Health as the body that represents NHS pharmacy contractors. We work closely with Local Pharmaceutical Committees to support their role as the local NHS representative organisations.
- The NHS Employers organisation is the voice of employers in the NHS, supporting them to put patients first. See www.nhsemployers.org for more information.
- Follow Dean Royles, director of the NHS Employers organisation, on Twitter at https://twitter.com/NHSE_Dean

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