

December 2020



NCL Care Home Pharmacy Team

Welcome to the first update from the North Central London (NCL) Care Home Pharmacy Team.

NHS England, NICE, British Geriatric Society and many healthcare organisations have identified the benefits of care home residents receiving specialist pharmacy input.

We are here to work collaboratively with you and your team to optimise medication safety for residents in care homes. As pharmacists and pharmacy technicians we can provide comprehensive medication reviews, reduce polypharmacy, offer advice on residents with swallowing difficulty, covert administration, assessing medication related falls and much more.

Hello, my name is Cynthia Agbenyegah, care homes pharmacist and I cover all types of care homes in Barnet. I offer advice on best practice and support the use of medicine.



Contact details:

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Mobile: 07985 237 490
(Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)



Hello! My name is Radha Shah and I cover the nursing homes in Islington. I am one of the pharmacists working within the Integrated Care Ageing Team (ICAT) part of the Whittington NHS Trust

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(Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)



Hi! My name is Beverly Boateng and I am a care homes pharmacist. I cover the care homes in Enfield and some homes in Haringey. I work with the Care Homes Assessment Team (CHAT).

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(Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm)



Hi, my name is Shahmyla Majid, medicines management technician and I also work in with the CHAT team. I support the care homes with medicines management queries and best practice.

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MYTH BUSTER

Can you absorb vitamin D through glass?

Your body can't make vitamin D if you're sitting indoors by a sunny window because ultraviolet B (UVB) rays (the ones your body needs to make vitamin D) cannot pass through the glass.

Vitamin D plays a role in bone health but there has been some research in the role of vitamin D in immunity. It is thought vitamin D can help activate T cells to help fight infections. Vitamin D can be found in oily fish, margarine and cereals. However most of us will need additional supplementation (vitamins) especially during the winter months.

Residents in a care home, residential home or assisted living facility should be supported to do this as part of self-care, to ensure their nutritional needs are met and to prevent developing vitamin D deficiency.

SPOTLIGHT ON MEDICINES MANAGEMENT

FRIDGE TEMPERATURE MONITORING

It is essential to closely monitor the storage facilities of all medicinal products within care homes to ensure that medicines stored according to the manufacturer's guidance. Medicines that are not stored appropriately, can lead to break down of the medicine which ultimately affects the stability and efficacy of medicines. A refrigerator specifically for pharmaceuticals must be used. Ensure the fridge is of the correct size to accommodate the medicines and there is enough space for air to circulate freely. The fridge must be kept locked and access limited to authorised staff only. Regularly cleaning schedule should be scheduled and documented to ensure fridge maintenance. The cold chain must be continued for all fridge medicines. When the community pharmacy deliver – fridge medicines must be checked upon receipt as per your local protocol and stored in the fridge as soon as possible to avoid exposure to high temperatures. Temperatures should be monitored daily with the current, minimum and maximum temperatures documented, using a digital thermometer with a reset function. Always follow manufacturer's guidance on correct storage.

Remember the 4 'R's:

READ the temperature and ensure it is between **+2°C to +8°C** for the fridge and **+25°C or below** for the room.

RECORD the **current, minimum** and **maximum** fridge temperatures and the **room** temperature at least once every day.

RESET the thermometer after recording the above readings. *Follow manufacturer's instructions.*

REACT if there is any deviation from the range of **+2°C to +8°C** in the fridge and above **25°C** for the room.

Recently asked questions

TRANSDERMAL PATCHES

Q: During COVID 19, we have had several residents who were prescribed transdermal patches and we have never had these prescribed before. Can you write the date on the patch?

A: Some staff members like to write the day of the week or date on the patch. Most manufacturers recommend against writing on patches due to insufficient data on this practice. Writing on the patch could theoretically damage or tear it. Moreover, if ink is used, it may leach through and come into contact with the medication - it

is not known whether ink might interact with a given medication or hinder its delivery. Staff must record the application of a patch and include the specific location, for example front, right, chest.

A registered nurse or senior care assistant can complete a body map for each transdermal patch prescribed. As it is a handwritten document it should be countersigned. The body map does not replace the need to record administration on the MAR and should be kept with the MAR to provide a comprehensive record. There should be a record on the MAR that clearly highlights when the next patch change is due. Remember to wash hands before and after handling and applying patches. All surfaces touched must be kept wiped clean with appropriate products.

Q: What should I do if the patch falls off?

A: Locate the patch if it is missing. Apply another patch documenting on the MAR chart, body map/transdermal patch record sheet in residents records. Do not re-use the patch.

If you notice the edges of the patch are starting to peel, use suitable tape (e.g. white surgical tape) to secure the patch edges only. A daily check for the patches is advised so staff can then determine if the patch applied still remains on the skin; record the outcome of this check in the care notes.

Q: How should we dispose of the patch?

A: Remove the old patch before applying a new one. Used patches still contain active drug. After removal of the patch, remove the backing and fold the patch over on itself. Place into a designated CD waste disposal bin in residential homes awaiting collection by the local pharmacy or a CD denaturing kit in nursing homes. Wash hands thoroughly after handling. Note used patches may not be suitable for disposal in CD disposal kits; check kit instructions for correct use and suitable items.