



Medicines Matters



**Medicines
Management**

Autumn 2025 (Volume 18 Issue 3)

Welcome to Medicines Matters! This bulletin is published regularly for all groups of staff working within the diverse range of services within Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership Trust. The bulletin aims to update staff on matters related to the Trust's Medicines Policy, and to highlight issues of current therapeutic interest. Electronic copies are available on the Trust internet. Underlined words are hyperlinks to relevant documents.

Current Therapeutic Interest

Drugs and Therapeutics Updates

The recent Drugs and Therapeutics Meetings have seen the reapproval of a number of our [Medicines Manual Guidance \(MMG\)](#) documents. All are now uploaded on our webpages.

MMG	Subject	Key Changes
1	Authority to supply/ administer medicines	Strengthening of governance to support prescribing process (non-EPMA), only approved CWPT prescriptions with a 'wet' signature and process for sending originals to pharmacy
2	Guidance for prescription writing	
19	Reporting and managing incidents involving medication	Change from 'A Just Culture' to using 'Being fair tool' when dealing with incidents.
23	Procedure for representative visits from the pharmaceutical industry	General updates - please review this MMG if you have any interaction with pharmaceutical Industry representatives
27	Procedure for new medicines	General 3 yr review. No significant changes. Useful guidance for prescribers considering newly licensed medicines
36	Assessment and documentation of drug allergies	Now updated to clarify allergy documentation with the EPMA system

Other Re-approved Guidance:

[Valproate Guidance](#) - updated to consider the recent MHRA (The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency) guidance including different patient information leaflets for male and female patients.

The most recent MHRA review has considered the risk of neurodevelopmental disorders in children fathered by men taking valproate around the time of conception and the risk of lower weight at birth for the gestational age in children exposed to valproate during pregnancy. Key points:

- Not to be started in new patients (male or female) < 55 years unless **two specialists** independently consider and document that there is no other effective or tolerated treatment, or there are compelling reasons that the reproductive risks do not apply
- Not to be prescribed to any [woman or girl](#) able to have children unless the conditions of the Pregnancy Prevention Programme (PPP) are followed
- Recommended - [male patients use effective contraception](#) throughout the valproate treatment period and for 3 months after stopping valproate, to allow for one completed sperm cycle not exposed to valproate.

Good Practice Points for Local Action

Prescribing *Top Tips* to improve patient safety

- > Prescribers to review patients face to face where possible. Prescribers have a responsibility to adequately assess a patient and their condition before prescribing any medication. This includes taking a comprehensive history, including previous adverse reactions, and ensuring the prescription is clinically appropriate for the patient's needs. See [MMG2](#) point 2 for further information
- > **Communication and Checking!** Use verified sources. Do not rely on verbal updates (e.g. from medical secretaries). Prescribe liquids as mg/ml, and check doses against previous medical records etc. The [Medicines Reconciliation Procedure](#) gives guidance on best practices (an inpatient guide, but principles apply to all).

Shortening expiry dates for medicines once opened - There is now a [poster](#) giving guidance. (This links to [MMG 4](#)—Storage).

Do NOT overfill waste bins!

Bins have a maximum fill line which must not be exceeded.

- Consider what should and shouldn't be in a pharmaceutical waste bin. Our [pharmaceutical waste bin poster](#) gives guidance. (Boxes should have patient's name obliterated and then put in a black bin or label put into confidential waste.)
- The lid should be sealed when in use.
- When a bin is nearly full to the fill line contact Trust Hygiene Services 0370 3500 988 to arrange collection and order a replacement.



In the Press -

Oral benzodiazepines and choosing equivalent doses

This web resource highlights benzodiazepines vary significantly in potency, duration of action, individual response and licensed indications, making it challenging to pinpoint exact equivalents. This must be considered when deciding equivalent benzodiazepines and doses.

Source: [Specialist Pharmacy Service](#)

Population-based study of long-term mortality risk associated with clozapine use among patients with schizophrenia

Population-based cohort study in Hong Kong (n=9,456) found continuous use of clozapine was associated with a lower risk of suicide mortality (and also all-cause mortality when used with other antipsychotics), when compared to continuous use of non-clozapine antipsychotics.

Source: [British Journal of Psychiatry](#)

Incidence and Nature of Antidepressant Discontinuation Symptoms A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

Review (50 RCTs; n=17,828) found that on average, participants who stopped antidepressants experienced 1 more discontinuation symptom than those who discontinued placebo or continued antidepressants. Dizziness was the most common, followed by nausea, vertigo and nervousness.

Source: [JAMA Psychiatry](#)



- For further information / comments / queries please contact the Medicines Management Team at Wayside House on 024 76536836
- Partnership Trust Chief Pharmacist - Sarfraz Bolia (sarfraz.bolia@covwarkpt.nhs.uk)
- Newsletter authors - Heather Beadle and Tracy Ewing, Partnership Trust Clinical Governance Pharmacists (clingov.pharmacist@covwarkpt.nhs.uk)

Medicines Matters Autumn 2025 - Top Topic: A tour of the Medicines Management Webpages

Medicines Management have created a large number of resources to help support staff working with medicines across the Trust. There may be useful information that can help support your area of work.

Our Trust have a new internet site. We now also have a **newly revamped Medicines Management intranet site** which aims to be easy to use to access our resources. Once you have found our webpage it should be easy to navigate to the information you are looking for. This quick guide gives an overview of what the Meds Mg webpages can offer. Any questions please ask!.

Where are the Medicines Management Webpages?

- Look under “Our Services”
- Click on “Medical and Pharmacy”
- On the next page, when you see the picture of Richard Onyon click on **Medicines Management**
- ✓ You’ve found our page!

What can I find on the Medicines Management webpage?

There are contact details, links to the patient information site “Choice and Medication”, a range of documents to help support Medicines Management, and links to other useful websites:

- ✓ **Please take time to check out the site.**
- ✓ If you have any questions or need information that we don’t yet provide please just ask!

Links to our **Newsletters** - Medicines Matters and Learning from Medicines Incidents

Click here to access our **MMGs (Medicines Manual Guidance Documents)**. There's a [summary](#) of all of them too!

Links to **clinical guidance documents** including the recently approved valproate guidance and supporting resources

URGENT!

Information on access of medicines **out of hours** (Inpatients/MH/LD)

This includes guidance on accessing **clozapine**

For the Pharmacy **Dispensing Service Information Pack** - Click here

Need to check what's on a unit's **stock list or in the emergency cupboard?** Click here

Need to order **feeding products?**

Accessing Medicines - See Links ->

For details on **disposal of Medicines**. Click here

The **fridge monitoring SOP**, room temperature monitoring, and how to read and reset thermometers.

Useful websites

- [Area Prescribing Committee](#) - Coventry and Warwickshire
- [British National Formulary \(BNF\)](#)
- [British National Formulary for Children \(BNFc\)](#)
- [Department of Health](#)
- [MHRA](#)
- [National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence \(NICE\)](#)
- [Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain](#)
- [Choice and Medication](#)

Also **useful links**. Any other questions just ask!

Prescription Stationery (FP10 & Internal)

Pharmacy Dispensing Service inc. out of hours

Stock Lists

Nutricia Feeding Products

Prescribing Stationery - ordering and management

Ordering stationery or reporting lost items? Click here

Pharmaceutical Waste

Temperature Monitoring and Principles of Safe and Secure Handling of...

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