

Recording, Maintaining and Sharing Drug Sensitivity/ Allergy Information in Care Homes

The recording of drug sensitivity/allergy is important to avoid the inadvertent prescribing, dispensing and administration of an offending drug to the resident. Care home residents are a frail and vulnerable population who are at a high risk of adverse drug reactions.

There are large discrepancies between drug allergy records, residents care home records, medicines administration record charts and GP medical records. Furthermore, there is no routine system in place for people to keep a record of their own drug sensitivities / allergies. This can lead to confusion over which drugs can be taken safely and can result in residents inadvertently taking a drug they are allergic to.

KEY POINTS

- To consistently record drug allergy and drug sensitivity information status for all residents on **medication administration record charts, residents care plans and GP clinical systems.**
- To maintain records documenting any new suspected drug sensitivity / allergic reactions.
- To share drug allergy /sensitivity information between all healthcare professionals.
- To check the resident's allergy /sensitivity status before any drug is administered.

HOW AND WHEN TO RECORD DRUG SENSITIVITIES/ALLERGIES

Allergy /sensitivity status section should be entered (SHOULD NOT BE LEFT BLANK) and consistently recorded for all residents on **MAR charts, residents care plans and GP clinical systems using the following terms:**

1. None known.
2. Unable to ascertain.
3. Drug Allergy/ Drug intolerance/ Adverse reaction.

If drug allergy / sensitivity status has been documented, record all of the following as a minimum in a structured approach:

- Drug name.
- Date when the reaction occurred.

The following information can be added to further clarify:

- Generic and proprietary name of the drug or drugs suspected to have caused the reaction, including the strength and formulation.
- Description of the reaction, if new.
- Route of administration.
- Which drugs or drug classes to avoid in future.

FOR EXAMPLE

RESIDENT ID

Penicillin - Severe Allergy – anaphylaxis can lead to hospital admission- July 2018.

Ibuprofen - Moderate intolerance – upset stomach- Aug 2017.

Ensure that the allergy is clearly visible to all healthcare professionals who are prescribing drugs.

Drug allergies should always be checked and recorded for the following:

- New residents to care home setting.
- Transfer of care settings i.e. discharge from hospital, transfer from another care home.

Useful contacts

East and North Hertfordshire CCG Care Home Pharmacy Team
Tel: (01707) 685000 or email: ENHCCG.vanguardpharmacists@nhs.net



East and North
Hertfordshire
Clinical Commissioning Group

RESPONSIBILITIES

Maintaining and sharing appropriate drug allergy/sensitivity information is the responsibility of all who are involved in the care of the resident and records i.e. GP, pharmacy staff, care staff, secondary care staff and family.

- Check a person's drug allergy/sensitivity status.
- Confirm it with them (or their family members or carers as appropriate) before prescribing, dispensing or administering any drug.
- Having up to date information on MAR charts is a safety check for care home staff when administering medication to a resident. Checking for residents' allergies / sensitivity is also an important safety check at the point of prescribing and dispensing of new and existing medication for a resident.
- All multidisciplinary staff should be aware of their responsibilities in maintaining / documenting information including updating records if new allergies /sensitivity are identified.
- Ensure that information about drug allergy /sensitivity status is updated, differentiated and included in all:
 - **GP referral letters.**
 - **Hospital discharge letters.**
 - **Care plans, MARs charts.**

- Advise residents (and their family members or carers as appropriate) to carry information they are given about their drug allergy / sensitivity at all times and to share this whenever they visit a healthcare professional or are prescribed, dispensed or are about to be administered a drug.
- All multidisciplinary staff should be aware of their responsibilities in communicating drug allergy information during transfer of care settings.

REFERENCES

Drug allergy: Diagnosis and management – NICE Clinical guideline [CG183] Published date: September 2014.

Alldred DP, Standage C, Zermansky AG, Barber ND, Raynor DK, Petty DR. The recording of drug sensitivities for older people living in care homes. Br J Clin Pharmacol 69: 553-557.

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