Care Homes Resources to support the Coronavirus (COVID-19): reuse of medicines in a care home or hospice guidance – A Guide for All Care Home Staff

This guide is intended for use by all care home staff to support the implementation of the new guidance issued by the Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England, and NHS Improvement on the re-use of medicines in a care home or hospice. All care home staff particularly senior staff are asked to familiarise themselves with this guidance in the event that it is needed. The new guidance sets out a standard operating procedure (SOP) for care homes and hospices in England on how to run a safe and effective medicines reuse scheme during the coronavirus pandemic: Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) SOP: Running a medicines re-use scheme in a care home or hospice setting.

The SOP provides guidance on using medicines labelled for one person who no longer needs them for another person. However this can only be done under certain circumstances and there are certain checks and processes that need to be followed, these are set out in the SOP and there are also links to supporting resources and a template log.

Guidance:

- Department of Health and Social Care, NHSE and NHSI: *Coronavirus (COVID-19): reuse of medicines in a care home or hospice:* https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-reuse-of-medicines-in-a-care-home-or-hospice
- DHSC, CQC, PHE, NHSE: *Admission and Care of Residents during COVID-19 Incident in a Care Home* https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-admission-and-care-of-people-in-care-homes
- NICE Social Care Guideline: *Managing medicines in care homes* https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/sc1

Webinars:

- PCPA Webinar: Managing COVID-19 in care homes A Call To Action! https://pcpa.org.uk/play-covid-video.html?ResourceID=316

Examples of training materials that could be used by care homes or hospices to support the implementation of the Coronavirus (COVID-19): reuse of medicines in a care home or hospice guidance could include those from Opus but we anticipate that there will be other resources available to use and will update this guide as these become available.

- **Consent**
  If a medicine is thought to be suitable for re-use, permission should, if possible, be obtained and patients, families and/or carers fully involved.
  - Form 1 – Letter to Residents re Re-Used Medicines during the Covid-19 Pandemic v3

- **Circumstances when this can be used and Requirement for individual medicines**

  Each individual care home or hospice must carry out a risk assessment on an individual medicine basis. The guidance states that its application is strictly for **limited purposes** and **very specific circumstances** where:

  1. No other stocks of the medicine are available in an appropriate timeframe and there is an immediate patient need for it

  2. No suitable alternatives are available in a timely manner i.e. a new prescription cannot be issued and supplied in the required time period

  3. The benefits of using a medicine that is no longer needed by the person it was prescribed for outweigh any risks for an individual patient receiving that unused medicine

➢ Form 2- High Level Risk Assessment for the Requirement of a Medicine for Re-Use during the Covid-19 Pandemic v3

- **Suitability of medicines**

  The medicine to be re-used must be checked against the criteria set out in the guidance (see table 1 to 3 of the SOP) by a registered healthcare professional. Where there are no registered healthcare professionals (HCP) on site (e.g. in a care home that only offers personal care and has no registered nurses on site), registered healthcare professionals (e.g. pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, GPs, community nurses) from other local organisations, such as general practices or community healthcare providers, can perform that check (this may be done virtually) and confirm that the medicine is suitable for re-use.

➢ This form Form 3 – Assessment for Re-Use of a Specific Individual's Medicine during the Covid-19 Pandemic v3 can be used to do the assessment and used as a record.

- **Storage of medicines**

  Care homes are not being asked to keep large quantities of medicines that could potentially be fit for re-use and currently should follow the usual procedures for obtaining and returning unused medicines for patients. If there are any drug shortages in the future however this may need to be reviewed.

  - Form 4 – Log of Re-Used Medicines During Covid-19 Pandemic v3
  - Procedure for the Storage of Re-Used Medicines During the Covid-19 Pandemic v3
  - Procedure for the Handling of Controlled Drugs for Re-use During the Covid-19 Pandemic v3
  - Procedure for Administering and Recording Re-Used Medicines During the Covid-19 Pandemic v3

Local Contact Info:

BNSSG CCG Wraparound Support Team for care providers through a Single Point of Access (SPA) telephone line for healthcare related support and advice (non-emergency clinical support):

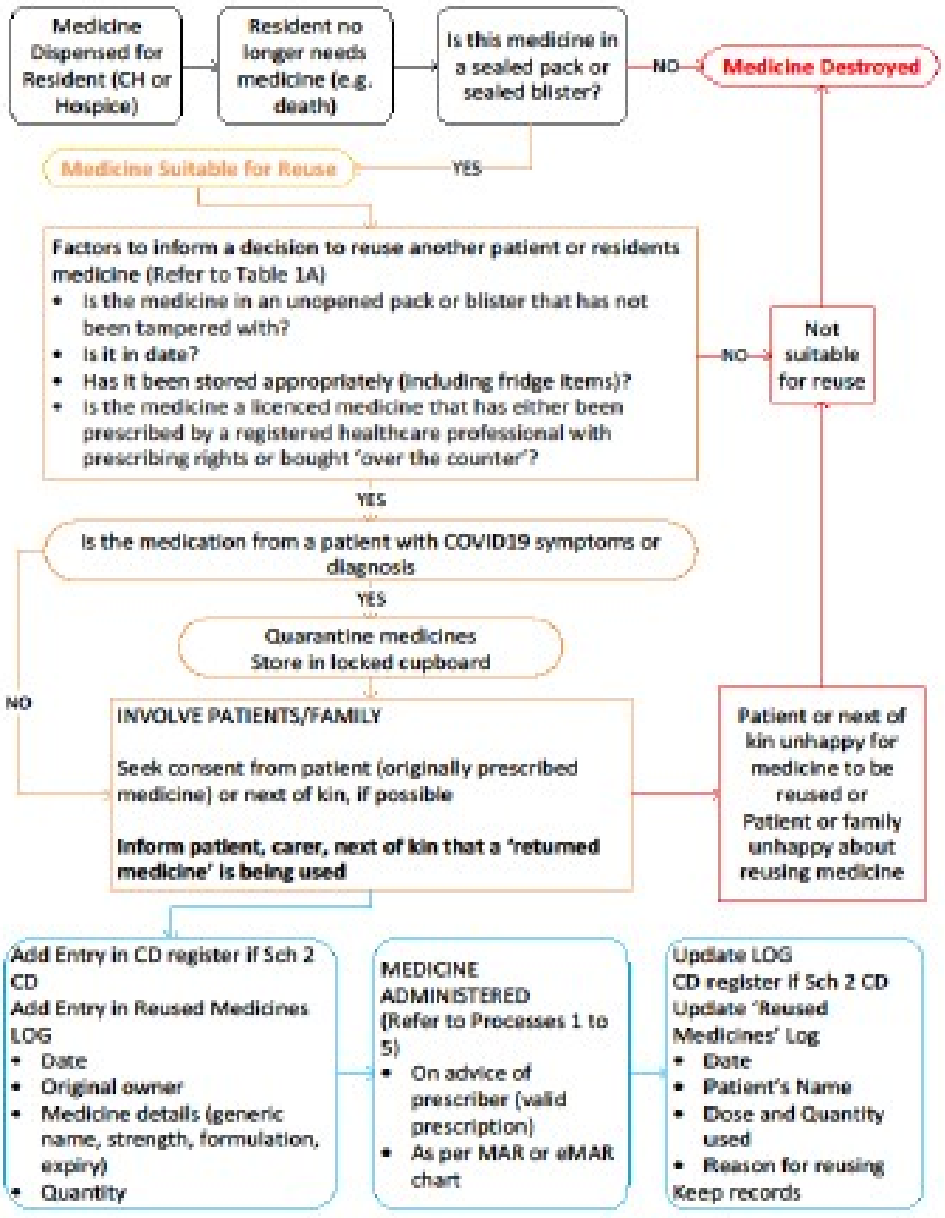
- calls will be directed to either the Sirona medicines advice line or the BNSSG Medicines Optimisation Care Home team (MOCH team)
- **24/7 Telephone:** 0300 125 6789

BNSSG Medicines Optimisation Team – for queries about this SOP

- Email: bnssg.medicines-optimisation@nhs.net

NHS England Community pharmacy Specialist Medicines LES

4. Medicines re-use pathway



1. NHS England, NHS Improvement, Department of health and social care, 2020. *Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) standard operating procedure: Running a medicines re-use scheme in a care home or hospice setting* [Online]. Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/881838/medicines-reuse-in-care-homes.pdf [Accessed 18 May 2020]