

CARE HOMES - GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE STORAGE OF MEDICINES REQUIRING REFRIGERATION

- Some medicines must be stored in a refrigerator because at room temperature they break down or become less effective. You need to know which medicines need to be kept cool. The Patient Information Leaflet that is supplied with a medicine will state whether the medicines need to be kept in a fridge.
- There should be a **separate**, secure fridge that is only used for **medicines** that require cold storage. A separate fridge may not be necessary in a small home unless there is a constant need to refrigerate medicines that a resident takes regularly, for example, insulin.
- The fridge must be kept locked at all times if kept in a room which can't be locked or can be accessed by staff who are not authorised to access medicines. If the fridge is kept in a locked medicines/treatment room with access only by authorised staff, then the fridge does not have to be locked.
- The maximum, minimum and actual temperature of the refrigerator should be monitored daily when it is in use, and recorded. The thermometer must be reset after each reading is made. See below for sample Refrigerator Temperature Record Chart.
- The fridge temperature must be kept between the range 2°C and 8°C. If the temperature is outside of this range, immediate action should be taken. There should be a written procedure of action to take if the temperature falls outside the normal range.
- If the fridge breaks down, it is important to identify the fault quickly, otherwise medicines may be wasted.
- The fridge should be regularly cleaned, positioned where there is enough space for air to circulate and not be overfilled as this could prevent the fridge working efficiently.

Immediate actions to take if fridge temperature outside normal range:

- Quarantine stock until advice obtained from pharmacy
- Attach notice to fridge to inform all staff fridge not in use
- Investigate how long temperature out of range
- Contact community pharmacy for advice
- Order replacement supplies of fridge items as necessary

