

## **CARE HOMES - GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE** **WHEN REQUIRED (PRN) MEDICATION**

Medication with a 'when required' dose (PRN) is usually prescribed to treat short term or intermittent medical conditions i.e. it is not to be taken regularly.

The process for administering PRN medication must be included in the care home's medicines policy. Consider when it is appropriate to use the homely remedies policy as this can be used to administer over the counter medication for some minor ailments without requesting a prescription.

### **Prescribing**

- PRN medication should be prescribed and labelled with:
  - Number of tablets to be taken
  - Interval between doses
  - Indication
  - Maximum amount to be taken in the day

Avoid the term 'as directed'

If instructions for administration are unclear, clarification should be sought from the GP.

### **Care plan**

- To ensure the medication is taken as intended, there must be a specific plan for administration recorded in the resident's care plan and kept with their MAR chart. The care plan should show:
  - Medication details: name, strength, form and dosage
  - Indication
  - Symptoms to look out for – specific for the individual
  - Treatment plan and expected outcome
  - If /how the resident can ask / indicate medicine is needed
  - How to administer, including special instructions
  - Review date – this will help consider the ongoing clinical need

### **Ordering**

- A record of the quantity carried over must be recorded on the new MAR so there is an accurate record of the quantity in stock. Take care when ordering to avoid excess stock and unnecessary waste.
- Medication that is still in use and in date should be carried over from one month to the next and not disposed of.
- PRN medication should be supplied in boxed/original packaging and not in a monitored dosage system.

### **Administration**

- There should be a record of PRN medication on the MAR chart
- PRN medication must be offered at times to meet the needs of the resident and not just when the medicine round occurs.
- The following should be recorded on the MAR chart
  - The exact time the medication was given – the back of the MAR chart can be used. This will help a carer decide if an appropriate interval has passed before administering next dose.
  - Amount given – if 1-2 tabs prescribed, record if either 1 or 2 tablets have been administered.

### **Monitoring**

The following should be noted and may indicate that a medication review is required:

- If side-effects are observed, medication not tolerated
- PRN medication is requested frequently or regularly
- PRN medication is not having the desired outcome
- PRN medication is regularly declined
- Resident's condition had changed or deteriorated

If a PRN medication is stopped, inform the community pharmacy so the medication can be taken off the next month's MAR chart.