



Medication Policy

Written by: Carly Steel (Director) and Lorraine Squires Shaw (Director): October 2020

Last reviewed: October 2022 by Bryony Thurlow

Reviewed: 15th October 2024 by Bryony Thurlow

Next review due October 2026

Introduction

This policy applies if you have duties in relation to medication for people you support. You must apply it to all types of medication and complementary remedies. The Royal Pharmaceutical Society has identified the core principles on the safe and appropriate handling of medicines (The Handling of Medicines in Social Care 2007). These include staff knowing which medicines each person has, the service keeping a complete account of medicines, staff who help with medication are competent, medicines are given safely and correctly, dignity and privacy of individuals is preserved, medicines are available when needed, they are disposed of safely, they are stored safely and they are given in the best interests of the individual taking the medication.

Responsibilities

All staff must be aware of their responsibilities for administering (giving) and managing (looking after) medication.

If you are a session leader or equivalent, you must follow the instructions and guidance of Lorraine Shaw, a Director. In addition, you must only give medication if you have proved to Lorraine that you are competent, and she has authorised you to do so. You must follow procedures set out in this policy, including the safe storage, handling, administration and recording of medication.

Lorraine Shaw has the overall responsibility for the safe storage, handling, administration and recording of medication.

All Directors are responsible for the correct policies and procedures being in place and that they are implemented correctly.

Training, Assessment and Authorisation

You must not undertake activities with medication until Lorraine Shaw has authorised you to do so and this must be renewed each year. Lorraine will keep records of medication training, assessment of competence, authorisation and review of authorisation for each member of staff.

Staff will be trained by a health professional or nurse to administer medication. Some staff have been trained on Administering Medication by Diana Children's Community Service. At present, NLT does not administer any specialised medication (eg via PEG/rectal/injection) so this will be reviewed should the need arise.

Training cannot be cascaded from staff member to staff member. Training should incorporate an assessment of your competence and The Health Professional must be satisfied you are competent to carry out the task. The Health Professional retains responsibility for the delegated duty. You can refuse to assist with the administration of medication if you do not feel competent to do so. As part of your training you will cover: signing in medication, using a MAR sheet, safe storage of medication, disposal of medication.

Supporting People to Consent to their Medication

This guidance applies to all types of medication and complementary therapies. You must have an understanding of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and its application to the issue of consent. You must not give medication to someone without their consent. You need to do all you can to help the person understand their medication.

If the person you support refuses to take their medication, even if they consented previously, you must not force them. Instead, make regular attempts to encourage them to take the medication. You should also record the reason for the refusal so this can be discussed. If a person you support continues to withdraw consent, talk with that person and other relevant parties. You must not hide medication in other substances to avoid dealing with consent.

CONSENT - CHILDREN UNDER 18

For a child under 16, someone with parental responsibility – as identified by the Children's Act 1989 - must give consent. However, involve the child as fully as possible in decisions, using their preferred communication style. Where children are able to decide for themselves, it is good to involve their family or the person with parental responsibility. However, there may be exceptions where there is a specific reason not to involve them. Only the person with parental responsibility can give valid consent.

Supply of Medication

Medicines supplied for an individual are the property of that person. Only give the medication to that person and not to anybody else. The same rule applies to dressings, nutritional supplements, creams and equipment.

The Medication Administration Record (MAR)

The purpose of the MAR is to record the medication administered by staff to people at NLT. Record all medications brought onsite or administered by staff on a *Medication Administration Record* (MAR chart).

Percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) training

Some of our students have a fitted PEG tube if they require assistance with receiving nutrients. Currently this number is low and we have 2 staff members that have received formal training both online and in person with a registered nurse. We also have the flush equipment on site which is stored in a sterile lockers which is managed and monitored by Heidi Mota.

In this locker it contains the following items: sterile gloves, disinfectant wipes, sterile water jug, tray(plastic),box with flush syringes (multiple), disposable aprons.

Controlled drugs record tracking book

All controlled drugs must be entered into the Controlled Drugs book on arrival at New Leaf and this record should be completed as well as the MAR sheet record every time medication is administered or received. The minimum quantity should be stored at all times.

Labelling

Before you give any medicine, you must ensure that it has a printed label containing the following information:

- The name of the person who the medicine is for
- Date of dispensing
- Name and strength of medicine
- Number to be taken and frequency of the medicine

There should be a patient information leaflet (PIL) supplied with each medicine. This should be made available to the person taking the medicine and any staff supporting that person to take it. Staff should never alter the medication details or administration instructions on dispensed medication labels. The only exception is to write on the label the date creams, eye drops, and similar items are opened.

Storage of Medicines

Store medicines so the products are not damaged by heat or dampness, cannot be mixed up with other people's medication, cannot be stolen and do not pose a risk to someone else.

At NLT medication will be stored in a locked medication box, within a locked cupboard within a locked building. Medication will not be left onsite overnight or at the weekend, as the individual will bring it with them each day.

Procedure for Administering Medication

1. Medication must be administered by staff who have received Medication Administration training by a qualified health professional.
2. Always give medication to the people you support with privacy and dignity.
3. Always wash your hands before giving medication.
4. Do not remove medicine from the container in which it was prescribed until the time of administration.
5. Do not remove other people's medication at the same time. Only take one person's medicine out of the container at any one time.
6. Check carefully, the identity of the person you are giving medication to: Check the Medication Administration Record for:

- The person's name
 - The name of the medicine to be administered.
 - The time the medicine is to be administered.
 - The dose (strength and number).
 - The way the medicine is to be administered.
 - Check for any recent changes. Make sure that no one has already given the medication dose to that person.
7. Identify the correct medicine containers, checking that the labels match the records.
 8. Check the expiry date of the medicine.
 9. Never measure out medicine for someone else to administer at a later time.
 10. Measure out the medicine and give it to the person.
 11. Sign the Medication Administration Record immediately after you have given the medication (before moving on to another person's medication). It must never be signed by a person who did not give the medication. For controlled drugs two people must observe the person taking the medication and sign the MAR sheet. The second person does not need to have received Medication Administration training as they are just a witness.
 12. When there is a choice of dosage, record the amount given to the person.
 13. If the person refuses the medicine or you are unable to give the dose for another reason, record this and explain why. Do this in the Medication Administration Record.

Tablets and Capsules

- It is important to avoid touching any medicines.
- If the tablets and capsules are in a monitored dosage or compliance pack, open the appropriate section and empty the tablets or capsules into a medicine pot.
- If the tablets or capsules are in bottles or strip packs, transfer the appropriate number of tablets or capsules into a medicine pot.
- Encourage the person to sit upright or stand. It is very difficult to swallow tablets or capsules when lying down.
- Give the tablets or capsules to the person
- Ensure the person has a glass of water to wash the tablets or capsules down.

Liquids

If the medicine is a syrup or mixture make sure that you use the medicine spoon or measure

provided by the pharmacist – do not guess or use a different spoon or allow the person to drink from the bottle.

Medicated Creams, Lotions or Ointments

- If you are applying medicines to the skin you must use gloves, both to protect yourself from absorbing the medication through your own skin and to prevent cross-infection.
- It can be difficult to know how much cream or ointment to use. The local pharmacist will be able to advise you if the directions are unclear – for example “apply sparingly”.
- Apply it in the direction of the hair as it lies on the skin.
- Always replace the top of the container after use. This will help prevent dirt and germs contaminating the medicine.

Eye Drops or Ointment

- Wash your hands.
- If necessary, wipe the eyes with cotton wool soaked in water – a separate one for each eye.
- Check expiry and opening date on label – eyes are particularly sensitive to any infection that might get into the bottle or ointment of eye drops.
- Be aware that vision may be blurred shortly after application. Explain this to the person before applying, and offer reassurance after application.
- Do not allow the dropper or tube to touch the eye.
- Only apply the number of drops or ointment according to instructions.
- Encourage the person to blink several times to ensure the drops spread over the eye.
- Replace the top of the container after use.
- Wash your hands.

Ear Drops

- Use ear drops at room temperature; warming them up if necessary – unless told otherwise. Do this by holding in your hand before applying. This will prevent any dizziness caused by using cold ear drops.
- Gently remove any discharge from the outer ear and ear canal, using a twist of cotton wool – a separate piece for each ear. Do not insert cotton wool buds in the ear.
- Ask the person to lie on their side or tilt their head with the affected ear facing upwards.
- Apply the drops according to the instructions.
- Ask the person to remain lying or have their head tilted for a few minutes to allow the ear drops to travel into the ear. If this is difficult for the person, gently plug the ear with cotton wool covered in petroleum jelly or moistened with the ear drops.
- Gently massage the ear and ear area to work the drops in and to get any trapped air out.

- Remove the cotton wool and allow the ear canal to dry.

As Needed Medication – PRN

PRN is a Latin term – pro re nata – meaning ‘as required’.

When giving PRN, you must record it on the Medication Administration Record. This is to make sure the right dose is not exceeded within a 24-hour period.

After Administering Medication

Contact NHS 111, immediately if there are contraindications or side effects develop which are listed as serious in the patient information leaflet.

Record Keeping

It is important to record what you do and when you do it. Records must be complete, legible, up to date, written in ink, dated and signed to show who has made the record. Never use correction fluid.

Misadministration of Medication

You must record errors and the cause must be investigated so we can learn from the incident and prevent a similar error happening again. You must immediately report any error or incident in the administering to Lorraine Shaw or another Director. In the unlikely event that you cannot speak to a Director, call NHS 111. Record the error on an Accident/Incident Report and observe the individual closely and record any changes.

Disposal Of Medication

Remove and dispose of medicines when the expiry date is reached, the course of treatment is completed or discontinued, the dose of medicine is taken from the dispensed container but not taken by the person or the medication is damaged. Store all spoiled medicine in the medication box until you can return it to the parents/carers. Parents/carers are then able to return it to the pharmacy. Never dispose of medication by putting it with rubbish or down the toilet.

Written: October 2020, Carly Steel (Director) and Lorraine Squires Shaw (Director)

Reviewed: October 2022.

Reviewed October 2024