

Take-Home Medications

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Policy/Purpose

Patients are able to receive initial doses of medication until such time as they can fill their prescription at a pharmacy, or for short term treatment requirements in specific situations as below

The use of this policy allows for the administration of medications in a manner that minimises the risk of harm for the patient and ensures health practitioners practice under current legislation.

Please Note:

Nurses cannot legally dispense medicines. Nurses are able to supply medication pre-packs that have been prescribed by a medical practitioner.

In the event of unexpected leave or unplanned discharge where the patient has been identified as being a high risk of not filling their prescription, short term medication may be issued either by the hospital pharmacist (in working hours) or by the medical practitioner as outlined in the procedure for non-packaged medicines below.

Scope

- Registered Nurses / Midwives /ENs with Fluid and Medication Competency

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- Medical Officers
- Lead Maternity Carers
- Ward Pharmacists

Principle Areas of Use

- Emergency Department (ED)
- Acute Medical Assessment Unit (AMAU)
- Gynaecology Assessment Unit (GAU)
- Surgical Assessment and Review Area (SARA)
- Day Surgery Unit (DSU) and Day of Surgery Admission (DOSA)
- Children's Acute Assessment Unit (CAAU)
- Ward discharge pathway patients from Day of Surgery Admissions (DOSA)
- Patients discharged early or on leave from areas who may not be able to reach a pharmacy that day
- Patients in pre admission clinics who require a single dose medication the day before surgery

Associated documents

Patient Drug Treatment Chart (QMR0004)

CDHB Preferred Medicines List ([Pink Book](#))

Notes on Injectable Drugs ([NZ Healthcare Pharmacists Association](#))

Anaesthesia Record C17002B

Pre Packaged Medication Procedure

Step	Action
1	Medication prescribed by Medical Officer on Patient Drug Treatment Chart in Once Only section or Anaesthesia Record C170002B
2	Nurse / midwife applies patient ID label to appropriate pre-packaged medication – taking care not to cover the instruction for use.
3	Patient / primary care giver given pre-packaged medication with advice pertinent to the drug by nurse / midwife.
4	Nurse / midwife signs Patient Drug Treatment Chart or Anaesthetic Record C170002B

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5	Medication prescribed by Medical Officer on Patient Drug Treatment Chart in Once Only section. or Anaesthesia Record C17002B
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Pre-package requirements:

- Medication name
- Quantity
- Dose
- Expiry date
- Date repacked
- Batch number
- The patient's name is written in the space provided on the pre-pack label or patients sticker added.
- The medicine must be prescribed by a doctor.
- The dosage prescribed should not be less than the dose on the pre-pack label (ideally it should be the same).

Non pre-packaged Medication Procedure

Medications not pre-packaged (particularly for use in the Emergency Department /CAAU)

Step	Action
1	Medication prescribed by medical officer on Patient Drug Treatment Chart in Once Only section.
2	Medical officer completes CDHB Label and attaches it to the medication box or bottle.
3	Medical officer fills the bottle or box with the appropriate type and quantity of medication.
4	Patient / primary care giver given pre-packaged medication with advice pertinent to the drug by nurse / midwife or medical officer.
5	Nurse / midwife or medical officer signs Patient Drug Treatment Chart.

Equipment:

- CDHB Labels (printed by pharmacy) with space for:
- Drug name
- Drug strength
- Drug dose

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- Drug frequency
- Date
- Quantity dispensed
- Patient name
- Doctor's name
- Space for instructions specific to the drug

Containers:

Size 0 white cardboard boxes:

to contain medication on strips or cards

30 mL bottles: to contain loose tablets

30 mL bottles: to contain elixirs

Measurement or evaluation

Areas using this policy will feedback on policy adherence on a regular basis to pharmacy.

References

Misuse of Drugs Act, 1975 and its Amendments, 1981

Misuse of Drugs Regulations, 1977 and Amendments

Medicines Act, 1981

Health Practitioner's Competence Assurance Act, 2003

Health Act, 1956

Guidelines for Nurses on the Administration of Medicines (NZNO 2007)

Health and Disability Sector Standards (Standards NZ, NZS8134:2008)

Policy Owner	Pharmacy Services and Applicable Units/ED
Policy Authoriser	Chief Medical Officer & Executive Director of Nursing
Date of Authorisation	15 December 2015

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