

POLICY ON A PAGE

MEDICINES CODE

1 What is the MEDICINES CODE?

The **Medicines Code** pulls together most of the Trust's policies and guidance on the handling of medication (including controlled drugs) to minimize the risks associated with medicines, ensure practice is legal and provide clear guidance on staff roles. The Medicines Code also contains within the appendices examples of relevant form for staff to use in certain situations to help ensure best practice.

The Medicines Code **does not cover** clinical guidelines specific to treatment options, e.g. rapid tranquilization, prescribing benzodiazepines. This guidance can be found at the link: www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/medication-related-guidance

It is regularly updated and published, at least annually. It

constantly needs updating to reflect practice issues within the Trust or changes to national guidance or legislation.



2 Key Topics Covered

- Safe prescribing and administration of medicines.
- The ordering, storage, monitoring, transport and disposal of medication.
- The role of patient group directions and medicines administered under protocols (MAUPs).
- Self-administration of medicines by patients on the wards.
- Incidents relating to medication, including errors and adverse reactions.
- Dealing with illegal substances and complimentary medicines
- Nurses dispensing leave and discharge medication.
- Advice on the roles non-qualified staff can take on
- Handling patients own medicines.
- Covert administration of medicines.
- Safe handling of FP10 prescriptions.
- Checking stock.



3 Using the Code

On page two of the Medicines Code each new edition lists the changes made since the last Code was published. Any changes in the Code are highlighted by putting the new or amended wording in *italic* text for that edition only.

The Medicines Code is a long document so to help you move easily to the different chapters; the Index has hyperlinks from the chapter or appendix title. Place the cursor over the chapter title that you want to read and using Ctrl + click you can go straight to that chapter or appendix you are interested in.



4 Why have a Medicines Code

NHS England requires that NHS trusts establish, document and maintain an effective system to ensure that medicines are handled in a safe and secure manner.

In order to meet this requirement, the Trust must ensure that:

- Professional practices concerning the use of medicines are current and up-to-date and that they remain subject to review and further development.
- All healthcare practitioners dealing with medicines remain aware of current policy.
- The concepts of patient focused care and patient empowerment are acknowledged and, where possible, are built in to policy and practice.
- Medicines management is seen as a high priority within clinical governance.



5 Whom to contact

All staff are encouraged to raise concerns about the guidance or suggest improvements with the Trust's Deputy Chief Pharmacist: James Atkinson

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