

Photographs in Medication Administration

1 WHY DO WE NEED THIS POLICY?

Medication errors can have serious consequences for patient care. One of the high-risk errors is to administer medication to the wrong patient. This risk is significantly increased when patients with similar names are on a ward or temporary staff who are unfamiliar with the ward or unit, are employed.

Unlike acute hospitals, where patient name tags are used, mental health and learning disability inpatient and residential units have avoided using them to reduce institutionalization. An alternative approach to reducing the risks of misidentification is to have a photograph of the individual on the patient's drug chart.



2 WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

- This only relates to adult patients (over the age of 18 years).
- This Policy exists to safely identify patients to support a reduction in medication errors occurring as a result of mis-identification.
- Unless in Forensic Service, patients will receive full detail of the reason for the photograph and be able to consent to it being taken or the right to decline.
- A best interest decision will be discussed and taken should a patient lack capacity to consent.
- Only one printed photograph per drug chart of the patient may be taken. If the photograph is to be uploaded to Carenotes it must be done immediately, with the digital image on the camera or device being destroyed.
- The photo will be obscured when the drug chart is emailed to the Pharmacy Department for medicine supply.
- On discharge or if another photograph is needed, the original printed photograph(s) will be given to the patient or destroyed in their presence. A digital photograph will still remain on their Carenotes record.
- This has been approved by the Trust's Caldicott Guardian and has a wide range of stakeholder engagement.



3 Quality Standards

- Safety
- Within legislation
- Within Caldicott Guardian framework



4 Understanding the Process

- Clear step by step procedural guide within the policy
- Clear information leaflet for explanation to patients on the purpose of a photograph being taken
- Clear consent form within the policy
- Clear process for documenting when consent is not obtained



5 CONTACT

Please contact your local Pharmacy team

