

Your emergency care summary

Medway Maritime Hospital uses Summary Care Records to support accurate prescribing out of hours



“It’s important to ensure that the correct medication is identified for the patient as soon as possible after their admission,” explains Penny Hartman, Medicines Management Technician.

“A high percentage of patients admitted to these wards are unable to provide us with all the medical information we need to be able to reconcile their medication. This has been a challenge for us so we were interested to see if having access to SCRs would be able to help us.

Medway Maritime Hospital treats around 400,000 patients each year mainly in Medway and Swale, but increasingly in other parts of North and West Kent too. Every day the hospital has approximately 150 patients admitted for hospital care and treatment¹.

The introduction of Summary Care Records (SCRs) at Medway NHS Foundation Trust has improved medicines reconciliation for patients admitted to wards.

Medicines Reconciliation is a process that occurs when a patient is admitted to hospital. Pharmacy staff check that all changes to a patient’s existing medications are intentional and documented. This process also highlights any unintentional changes so that these can be referred to a doctor or pharmacist for review, such as:

- Incorrect medication strengths
- Incorrect frequency of dosage, or
- Unintentional omission of medication a patient needs to continue taking.

¹<http://www.medway.nhs.uk/about-the-trust>



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Having the SCR, when available, has led to a reduction in the number of telephone calls we have had to make to GP practices to obtain this information and greater efficiency in managing the medication a patient is on when they are discharged.”

“Being able to view SCRs has meant that we have been able to obtain the right medication information in a timely manner.

“This has not only provided benefits for our patients on the wards but for the members of the pharmacy team as well. Having the SCR, when available, has led to a reduction in the number of telephone calls we have had to make to GP practices to obtain this information and greater efficiency in managing the medication a patient is on when they are discharged.”

Liz Pearce, Lead Medicines Management Technician, explains: “I was first introduced to SCR by our local PCT (Medway). I immediately saw the possible benefits this would bring to patient care, especially when patients are unable to provide accurate information about their medicines on admission to hospital.”

Attempts to obtain information direct from GP practices are also not always successful. In some cases this is due to GP practices being unable to provide patient information over the phone, or because the information is needed out-of-hours, at weekends or bank holidays, when the GP practice is closed.



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Medway Maritime Hospital Case Study

A patient was admitted to the elderly care ward with a urinary tract infection.

It had not been possible for the patient to bring a supply or list of her regular medication with her, as she had arrived via ambulance at the hospital.

The patient was able to tell doctors that she took Stalevo – a medication to treat the symptoms of Parkinson's disease – but was unable to say how much and how often.

For patients taking Stalevo, in order to maintain effective symptom control it is very important that the medication is not stopped suddenly and the correct dose is prescribed and administered at the right times and frequency.

Taking medications to manage Parkinson's disease at the wrong time can lead to a 'switch-off/switch-on' effect, which can make symptoms distressingly worse for the patient and cause significant problems in the ongoing management of the condition.

As her GP practice was closed at the time of admission, doctors caring for the patient were unable to contact her GP to check her medication history.

After viewing the patient's SCR, a Pharmacy Technician was able to confirm the dosage, frequency and timing of each of the patient's medications. This enabled doctors to prescribe the correct doses at the correct frequency and time; obtain the medication from the hospital pharmacy; and quickly administer it to the patient.

If the SCR had not been available, it is likely that the medical team would have missed important parts of the patient's medical history, and the patient may have missed important doses of their medication.

In this particular case, failure to prescribe and administer the appropriate dose for Parkinson's disease medication at the right time, could have disrupted the patient's treatment and exacerbated their condition, possibly resulting in unwanted body movements and lack of body control.

To find out more about Summary Care Records:

Visit www.nhscarerecords.nhs.uk

Contact your local Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) www.pals.nhs.uk

Call the Summary Care Record Information Line on 0300 123 3020

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