



Information Sheet

Administering medicines safely and accurately can be challenging at the best of times, even more so when an individual has personal worries or issues.

Issue:

Where a member of staff has personal concerns, this can cause them to make mistakes.

Examples:

Examples of issues that a person might have that could impact on their ability to administer medicines safely could include:

- Not feeling well
- Experiencing an emotional event within their work environment
- Experiencing an emotional event outside of work
- Having made a previous error and now feeling scared
- Feeling unsupported in their role

Prevention:

How to prevent the issue arising

With the pressures of everyday working life taking priority, often people's personal factors take a backseat. It is important that Managers and senior staff take the time to identify any personal issues and support their staff where they can, particularly through this pandemic.

We have put together a Discussion Sheet for you to use in your organisation to consider whether you have been giving enough consideration to staff members' personal situations that could be impacting their ability to administer medicines safely.



Personal Issues: Discussion Sheet

Covid-19 Considerations

During the pandemic, it has been well reported that staff members have been suffering with additional concerns and mental health issues. Have you considered:

- Are staff scared of catching Covid-19?
- Are they a carer for someone shielding at home?
- Are they home schooling their children as well as going to work?
- Have they got concerns about PPE or procedures?
- Are they concerned about supporting people with Covid-19?

Consider the below questions with your senior team to see whether staff are supported with their personal concerns in your organisation



Do you observe?

- ☐ Are you actively monitoring staff to search for any signs of personal issues inside or outside of work?
- ☐ Are you aware of changes in behaviour or demeanour that may be caused by personal concerns?
- ☐ Do you know your staff well enough to be able to identify any mental health concerns that may arise?



Do you ask?

- ☐ Do you engage with staff in a friendly way to ask about them and how they are feeling?
- ☐ Do you have 'coffee break chats' to check in with your team?



Personal Issues: Discussion Sheet



Do you support?

- ☐ Where errors are identified, do you use coaching techniques to understand the reason for the error, and how to prevent them in the future?
- ☐ Do you offer mentoring to your staff such as 1:1 sessions with a senior member of staff, or a Pharmacist?
- ☐ Do you review Learning Needs Reports after competency assessments?



Do you enable?

- ☐ Have you fostered an open culture where staff can express their feelings and concerns without judgment?
- ☐ Can staff identify medicines errors or procedural issues within the organisation and be listened to?
- ☐ Can staff report their own medicines errors without blame?
- ☐ Will staff be supported to help resolve any issues with medicines?
- ☐ Can staff be open and transparent with senior staff members?

Where the answer is no to any question, consider ways your organisation could help engage with staff members and support them on a personal level.



Ideas for additional support could include:

- ➔ Mentoring or buddy systems
- ➔ 'Check in' sessions
- ➔ Further training where staff feel uncertain
- ➔ Coaching methods following a medicines error

Where staff feel supported, they will be less likely to make an error when administering medicines to the people they support.