

Safe Administration of Medicines from Original Packs in Care Homes

April 2023

With the continued drive to encourage administration of medicines from original packs, you may now receive medicines for the people you support in original packs, rather than blister packs.

To ensure you are aware of how to safely administer medicines this way, it is essential that ALL staff who administer medicines have read and understood this information sheet.

Q How should I store the medicines?

A It is best if medicines for a particular person are stored together.

☒ **TIP:** Often care homes use separate containers to store each person's medicines in. This keeps all the medicines for one person together. These must then be locked away.

☒ **TIP:** Make sure any medicines that need cold storage are placed in the medicines fridge and any Controlled Drugs (CDs) are locked in the Controlled Drug cupboard and a record made in the CD register.

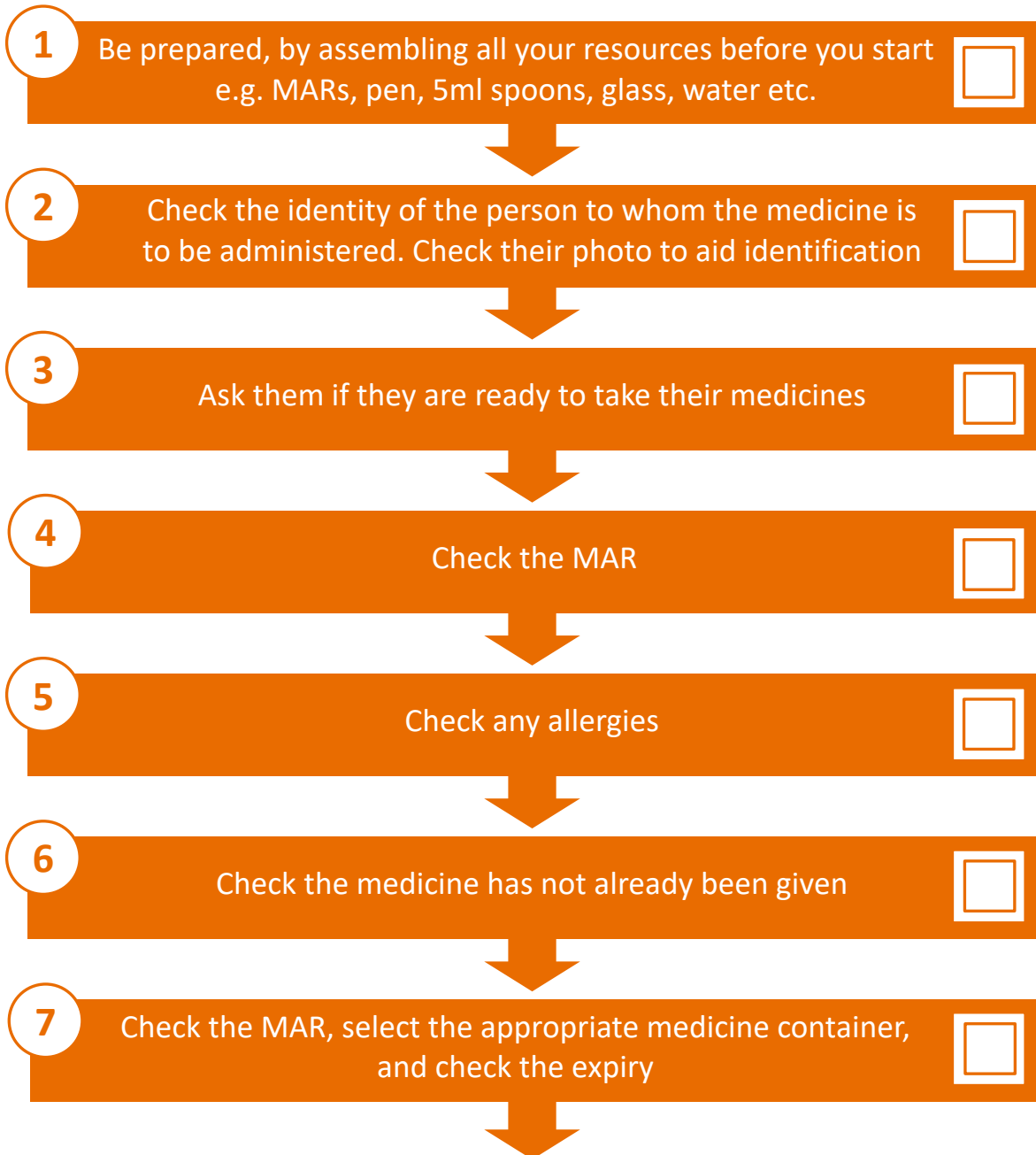
Q What is the difference between administering medicines from original packs compared to blister packs?

A You may have got into the habit of simply selecting the medicine from the appropriate section of the blister pack when you were administering from the MDS (monitored dosage system) without fully reading all the important details.

It will now be a case of using best practice EVERY time you administer. This means you MUST read the label very carefully for each medicine and check each detail on the label against the information on the MAR. The details MUST agree before you can administer the medicine.

You must use the following procedure EVERY time you administer a medicine.

Procedure for the Administration of Medicines from Original Packs

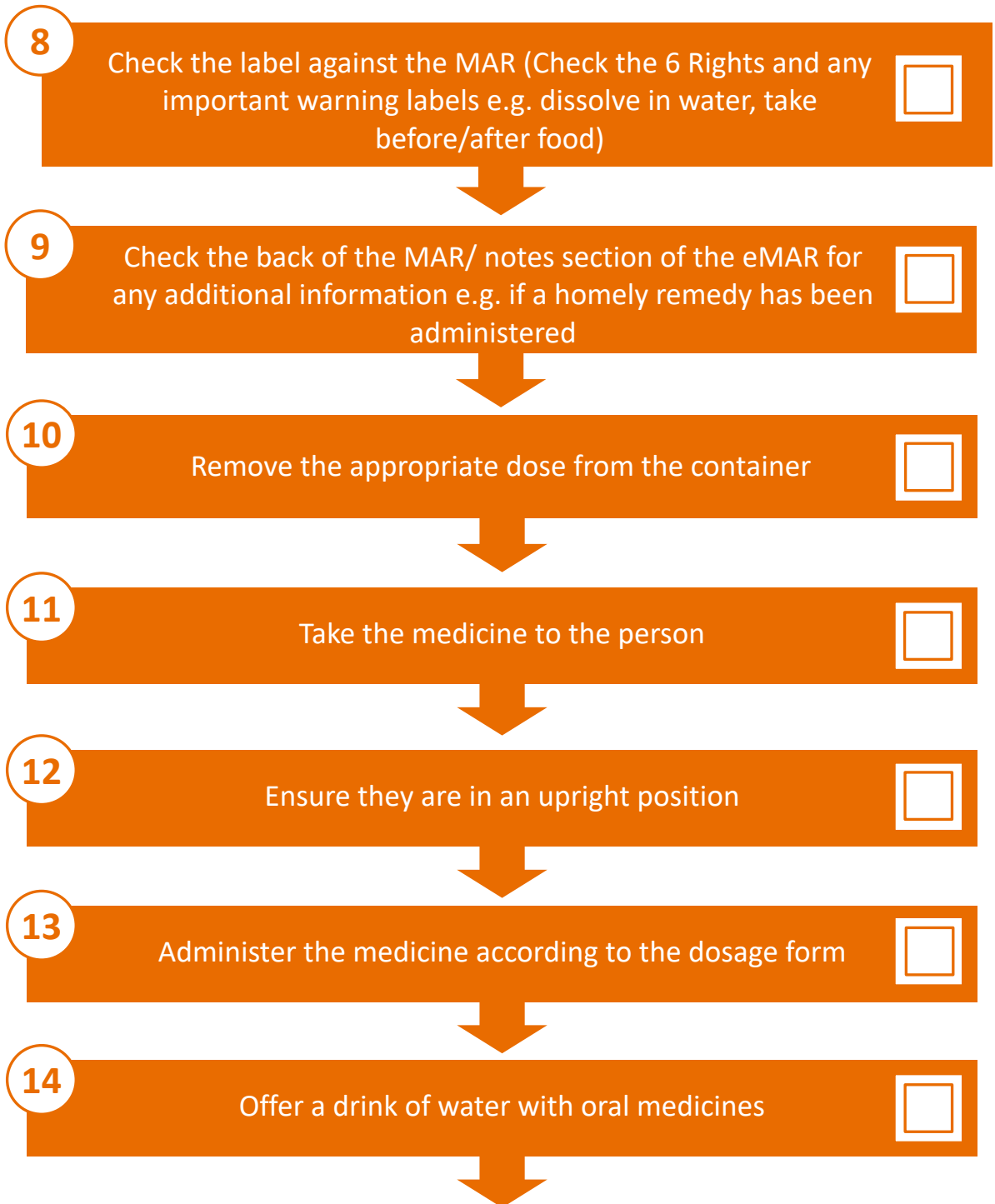


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MAR = Medicines Administration Record.

This can be a paper version, or an EMAR (electronic version)

Procedure for the Administration of Medicines from Original Packs



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Procedure for the Administration of Medicines from Original Packs

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Witness the person taking the medicine



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Record the administration of the medicine IMMEDIATELY by initialling the correct date space on the MAR or by entering a code if the medicine is refused. Add any additional information on the back of the paper MAR or in the notes section of the eMAR



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Proceed to the next person/medicine



How should I administer?



To make sure no medicines are forgotten, it is best to administer the medicines in the order they appear on the MAR. If you work down the MAR in a systematic order, you will be less likely to make a mistake.




TIP: Be aware there may be more than one MAR page for each person.




TIP: Always follow the correct procedure and remember to double check the medicine label against the MAR paying particular attention to the 6 Rights- i.e. you are giving the right person, the right medicine, at the right dose, at the right time, using the right route and bearing in mind the person has the right to refuse.

Where are the particular areas of risk?


 There are many areas of risk with administering medicines. Here are a few of the common ones:

- ➔ When you administer tablets from a manufacturer's blister pack, make sure you take the strip of tablets out of the box, check the back of the strip to make sure the name of the medicine printed on it corresponds with the name of the medicine on the label, pop out the tablet into a medicine pot and then replace the strip back into the box straight away.
- ➔ You must make sure you only administer one medicine at a time and replace the strip of medicines back into the box immediately. This will reduce the likelihood of you replacing the wrong strip of medicines into the wrong box.
- ➔ When you pop tablets or capsules out of a manufacturer's original pack, select the tablet in a consecutive order (i.e. use the pack as if it were a day-marked pack) and not just randomly. This will ensure you don't get left with all sorts of odd tablets in amongst the empty popped blister strips and will make auditing much easier and will reduce the likelihood of error.
- ➔ Where medicines have been dispensed by the pharmacy into plain tablet boxes, you must be particularly careful to avoid error.

 **TIP:** Only administer one medicine at a time.

- ➔ Be careful of medicines that have the same name but different strengths e.g. medicines for Parkinson's or epilepsy - often people might be taking a combination of different strengths at different times of day.

Will it take longer to administer medicines using original packs?

 Yes, to start with, as you need to get used to checking every single detail on the label against the MAR for each medicine, one point at a time. Like most things, the process will speed up as you get used to doing it. There are no short cuts.

Make sure you remember and use the 6 rights when you administer.



Q How should I record the administration of medicines?

A You must record on the MAR whenever you administer a medicine so this should be no different to what you have been doing before. It must be obvious which medicines have been given, when they were given and by whom. The MAR sheet must be an accurate record of all medicines that have been received into the home, those administered and those refused and you must have a record of which medicines have been returned.

Q Do I need to be trained to administer medicines?

A **REMEMBER** - Make sure staff are fully trained and have been assessed as competent before they administer medicines.

The information in this leaflet does not cover all aspects of medicines handling. See pages 8 and 9 of this information leaflet for our **Gold Standard Training Pathways** to ensure your staff are confident and competent to administer medicines where you work.

5 Top Tips for Medicines Handling

1 Make sure you are familiar with the medicines policy

2 Make sure all details are in the care / support plan

3 Read the MAR and medicine label carefully

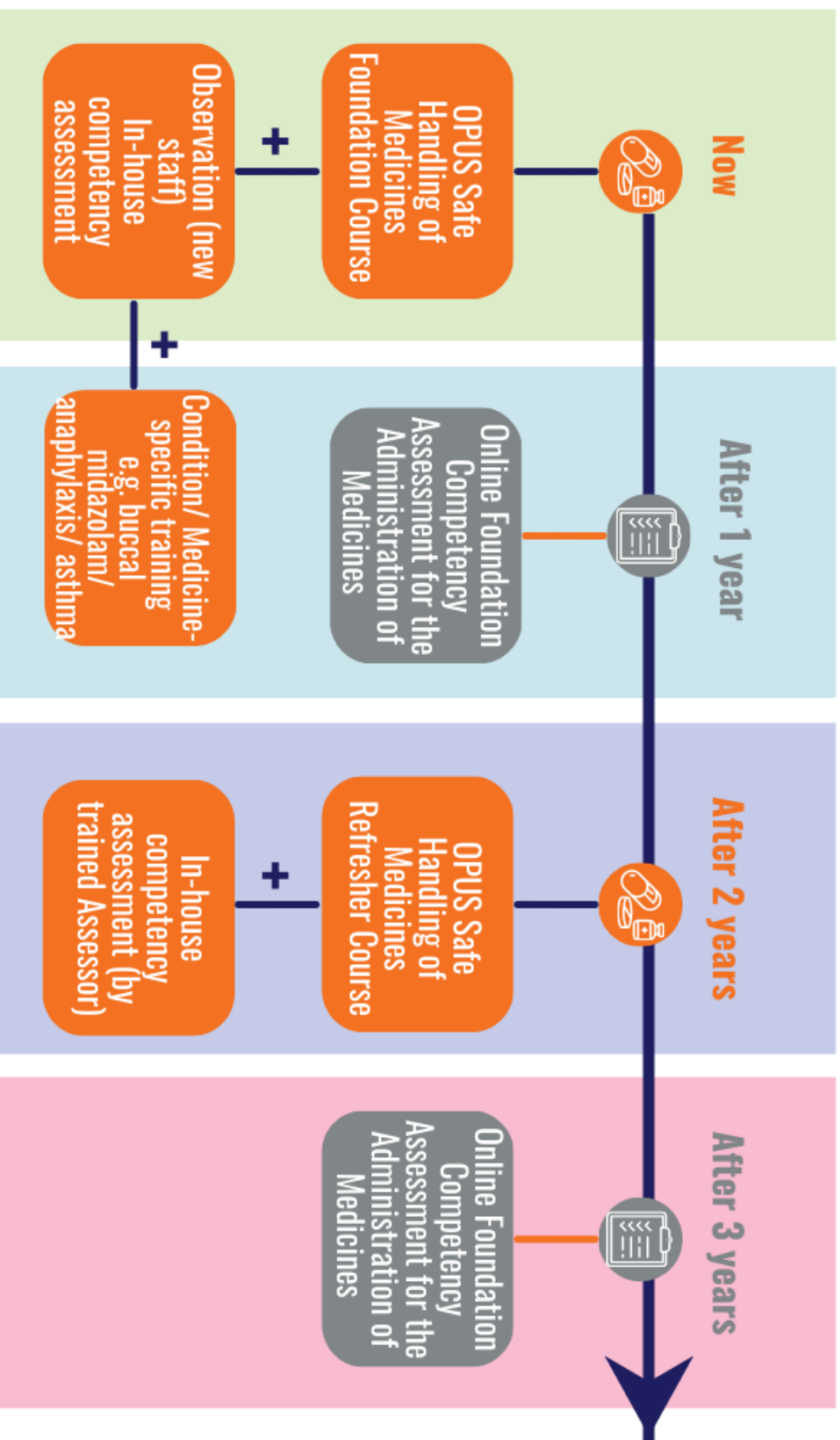
4 Understand the procedures where you work

5 If in doubt, check it out!





Gold Standard Medicines Training Pathway for Care Staff and Support Staff





Gold Standard Medicines Training Pathway

for Managers, Registered Nurses and Senior Staff

