



## NHS England - Midlands Area Controlled Drugs Newsletter



This newsletter contains local and national CD information to support safe use and handling of controlled drugs

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### Drug Safety Alert to Prescribers and Dispensers of Methylphenidate

The MHRA have issued a drug safety alert relating to Methylphenidate, published on 26.09.22.

In relation to Methylphenidate long-acting (modified-release) preparations; caution is advised to

prescribers and dispensers if switching patients between different long-acting product formulations (Concerta XL, Medikinet XL, Equasym XL, Ritalin LA, and generics) as different instructions for use, and different release profiles, may affect symptom management.

Please view the link information below:

[‘Methylphenidate long-acting \(modified-release\) preparations: caution if switching between products due to differences in formulations’](#)

### Prescription Requests Made by Fax or E-mail

We have received several reports of pharmacies being asked to dispense CDs from a faxed or e-mailed prescription.

Faxed and e-mailed scripts **do not comply with the requirements of a legally valid prescription.**

When prescriptions are presented this way, there is significant risk that the script(s) may be sent to several pharmacies and duplicated.

Supplying Sched 2 & 3 CDs without possession of a lawful prescription, could be prosecuted as a criminal offence.

In all cases, the supply of CD medication should not be made to the patient until the original prescription form is in the pharmacist's possession.

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### Community Pharmacies—Presentation of Fraudulent Private Prescriptions



Incidents have occurred across other Regions, where individuals are presenting private prescriptions for codeine linctus (Sch 5 CD) for dispensing against. These prescriptions contain real GP and practice names. They have been intercepted by diligent pharmacy teams who have directly contacted the prescribers for verification. Therefore, we would like to remind you to be vigilant when presented with CD private prescriptions.

Always check the validity of all private prescriptions for CDs, and in particular those presented for codeine linctus and codeine tablets, as follows:

- Check the prescription validity and if found to be not valid / fraudulent, then do not dispense (retain the script if possible, without putting staff at risk)
- Call the police: Use 999 if the individual is present, otherwise call 101.
- Record a description of the individual and retain CCTV recordings if available
- Notify NHSE CDAO team, please find contact email at the head of this newsletter.



## Guidance for Prescribers—Evidence for the Safe Carrying of Cannabis Medicines

The Department of Health & Social Care, and the NHS now publish the following wording which may be helpful to GPs, and other prescribers on how patients can prove they are legally carrying prescribed cannabis medicines.

Prescribers can advise patients:

Keep your medicine in its original packaging, as the dispensing label contains important information about the medicine and the person it's prescribed for.

The dispensing label is the label the

pharmacist puts on the medicine packet when they give you your prescription medicine.

You should also keep a copy of the prescription, and a letter (if you have one) from the doctor who prescribed the medicine. The letter should include your personal details (including name and address), as well as the prescribing doctor's name and contact details.

You may need to show ID that matches the details on the dispensing label and the prescription, or the Dr's letter, if you have one.

Acceptable forms of ID include:

- valid passport
- photo driving licence
- proof of age card, such as the PASS card from the national Proof of Age Standards Scheme

If you need any legal advice about possessing a cannabis-based medicine, speak to a legal adviser or solicitor.

Further information regarding cannabis for medicinal use can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/medical-cannabis/>

## Prescribing of CDs by a Chiropodist, Podiatrist, Physiotherapist, and Paramedics

Advice on prescribing of CDs by a Paramedic, Chiropodist, Podiatrist and Physiotherapist can be found on the Health and Care Professions Council's website - <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/meeting-our-standards/scope-of-practice/medicines-and-prescribing-rights/controlled-drugs/>

Chiropodist, Podiatrist and Physiotherapist Independent Prescribers (IPs) may prescribe from a *limited* list of CDs for the treatment of organic disease or injury (list is shown in the link above).

Presently, paramedics are able to supply and administer *some* CDs under exemptions from the Human



Medicines Regulations (2012) or through the use of PGDs and PSDs. **However, they are unable to independently prescribe CDs**, which is subject to changes to the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001.

**Paramedics who are Supplementary Prescribers (SPs) can prescribe CDs but only in accordance with a service user's clinical management plan.**



In October 2019, the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs recommended the Home Office amend the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001. However, these Regulations have not been changed to allow paramedics to independently prescribe CDs at this time.

## Pain Management—On-Line Resources for Clinicians and Patients

Live Well With Pain is an on-line toolkit, developed by clinicians, for clinicians, to help support patients towards a better understanding and self-management of their long term pain. The website offers a range of knowledge, skills, tools and resources to be utilised within brief patient contact times.

The resources have been tried and tested in pain and self-management services for the past two decades and offer:

- A choice of written and audio-visual content, some developed with the

input of patients.

- Short videos demonstrating how clinicians can approach pain management to progress conversations towards a focus on the changeable aspects of pain.

One of the most effective tools developed by the team is available for both clinicians and patients to use – 10 footsteps.

Each of the ten footsteps covers a discrete self-management theme. Each is recognised by clinicians working with chronic pain to be a

vital component in the 'toolkit' of people who have learnt to manage their pain effectively.

A sister site "My Live Well With Pain" has been created solely for the use of patients on their journey, without the clinical and technical jargon that may distract them in the Clinician based site.

[Home - Live Well With Pain](#) – link to website

[Cover - 10 Footsteps for clinicians \(livewellwithpain.co.uk\)](#) – on-line tool