

Safeguarding: transfer of medicines



REPORT

- The incident related to a young family of four who were well known to the pharmacy. The mother and two children had been moved to a safe house following a domestic violence situation. This was unknown to the pharmacy team.
- The father came into the pharmacy to collect his prescription. Seeing outstanding prescriptions for the children, the staff member, who had recently returned from maternity leave, inadvertently revealed the children's new address.
- The staff member realised her mistake and reported it to the pharmacist and the branch team reported the incident via the incident management system at the end of the day. The incident was followed up the next morning by the Superintendent's team.
- Concurrently the incident was reported overnight by a family member via the organisations internal complaint procedures, resulting in a duplicate investigation.

LEARN

- Even when patients are well known to the pharmacy team they should be mindful that family circumstances can change very quickly. Pharmacy teams should ensure they always follow "transfer of medicines" Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Pharmacies should have robust processes in place to reintroduce staff after maternity leave.
- Significant serious complaints can come in overnight. A process to triage and address serious complaints may be useful. This should include ensuring other business stakeholders are aware of internal processes.
- Despite increased working from home as a result of COVID-19, it is important that members of staff work together closely to address complex situations.

SHARE

- Details of the incident were shared internally, and a full review took place.
- Details were shared with Community Pharmacy Medication Safety Officers (MSOs) at the Community Pharmacy Patient Safety Group meeting. MSOs will disseminate learnings via their networks.
- Details were also published on the Patient Safety website and shared with key stakeholders.

ACT

- MSOs have shared the incident with pharmacy teams and reminded them to always follow their company SOPs when transferring medicines.
- Members to consider their processes following the reintroduction of staff after maternity leave.

REVIEW

- Community Pharmacy Patient Safety Group to continue to monitor safeguarding and potential safeguarding concerns.