Shared learning

Theme of the week Safe and Secure Handling of Medicines

Date 11/11/2024

Background and context

Safe and Secure Handling of Medicines audit identified some areas which require improvement in order to achieve the adequate standard of medication safety

What happened?	What should have happened?	What we will do differently next time	What have we learned?
1) Tablet and capsule strips were removed from their original outer containers	1) Tablet and capsule blisters must always be in their original containers - they must never be removed from them	1) Never remove tablet and capsule blisters outside the outer container	1) Removing tablet/capsule blisters from outer containers can cause serious drug errors due to misreading
2) Expired medications were found in trolleys, cupboards and fridges	2) Expiry dates should be checked routinely, and expired items returned to Pharmacy or disposed of in the ward Pharmacy Returns Unit	2) Assign someone to check expiry dates of non-central storage area such as trolleys, patient cupboards and fridges at least once weekly	2) Increased risk of expired medications being given to patients if expiry checking procedures are inconsistent
3) Many discontinued patient labelled medications were found on wards - these were medications that were no longer prescribed, or for patients that were no longer on the ward	3) Discontinued named patient (labelled) medications should be returned to Pharmacy to reduce risk of drug errors	3) Return discontinued patient labelled items to Pharmacy for re-labelling or disposal as appropriate	3) Increased risk of incorrect medication/dose being administered to patients if discontinued medications are not removed
4) Medications with a 'once opened' shelf life did not have expiry dates noted on them	4) Expiry dates should be calculated and written on containers with a 'once opened' shelf life e.g. liquids, vials etc.	4) Always check the once opened shelf life of liquids, vials, multi-dose containers etc. and write expiry date	4) Increased risk of expired medications administered to patients if once opened expiry not written

☑ I have read this

Name	Job role	Signature