

Scenario 1 – Patient Transfer from Mental Health Bed to Acute Trust

Issue	The purpose of this “Safety Guidance” is to highlight key issues to be considered when a patient is transferred from a mental health inpatient bed to an acute hospital ward.
Confirm	Confirm current medications with the mental health ward. A paper photocopy of the drug chart (and any supplementary charts) should be transferred with the patient into hospital. Please contact the ward to obtain this information if it cannot be located. Please note that as some wards transfer to electronic prescribing, charts will appear as print-outs while others remain as photocopies of paper charts. Check also whether any “as required” medications have been given in the past 24hours to prevent overdose.
Consider	Consider the impact that mental health medications may have on any newly arisen physical illness. Weigh up the risk and benefits of any changes to mental health medications. If any need to be delayed (for example a depot antipsychotic), stopped or reduced; please discuss with or inform the mental health team. This includes medications used to prevent side effects of mental health medications, such as procyclidine for extrapyramidal side effects caused by antipsychotics. Most psychotropics should be reduced gradually in non-emergency situations. Please contact the ward or liaison team for advice on how to safely reduce and stop.
Monitor	Continue required monitoring of mental health medications. Contact the mental health ward or mental health pharmacy team for advice if parameters are out of range. For high-risk mental health medications; see other Treat as One Safety Guidelines on clozapine, lithium or depot injections.
Supply	If a mental health medication is not stocked on the ward, please contact the pharmacy team for supply as soon as possible. If this cannot be provided on the same day, contact the mental health ward for transport of supply. This is a critical period for the patient’s mental health and thus withholding treatment is likely to have a negative impact.
Action for Medical Staff	Review information provided by the mental health trust regarding history and current medications. Prescribe medications as per drug card photocopy provided by the mental health trust unless contraindicated.
Action for Pharmacy Staff	Complete a medicines reconciliation as per Trust policy, including the mental health Trust drug card as one of the sources. If the drug card cannot be located on the ward; contact the mental health ward or pharmacy team to obtain this. Supply required medications from the dispensary. If a mental health medication cannot be obtained via your Trust, consider contacting the mental health hospital for supply. Check for interactions with newly prescribed medications. Check whether any “as required” medications have been given in the past 24hours. This is to prevent overdose.
Action for Nursing Staff	Obtain the photocopy of the mental health drug card from mental health trust staff as patient is admitted. Give medication as per drug card and document compliance as appropriate.

Note contact numbers at the foot of the next page –

Please also see “Protocol for Hospital Transfers between TEVV NHS FT and Acute Hospitals” [TEVV intranet](#) or [TEVV Website](#)

Title	Medication Safety Guidance: Transfer of Patients Between Mental Health Bed and Acute Trust Hospital Ward		
Approved by	TEVV Drug & Therapeutics Committee	Date of Approval	23 rd March 2023
Protocol Number	PHARM-0156-v1.0	Date of Review	1 st April 2026

Scenario 2 – Patient Transfer from Acute Trust to Mental health Ward

Issue	The purpose of this “Safety Guidance” is to highlight key issues to be considered when a patient is transferred from an acute hospital ward to a mental health inpatient bed.		
Communicate	<p>Provide a clear plan on the discharge letter, including the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New diagnoses and relevant management plans • Operations or procedures carried out • Investigations and results • Clinical narrative • Changes to medication • Ongoing monitoring needs <p>A discharge letter should be provided at the time of discharge and be sent with the patient to the mental health ward. A letter must be provided even if no changes to medications have been made.</p> <p>Please also communicate whether any doses of “as required” medications have been given in the 24hour period prior to transfer. This is to prevent accidental overdose. Consider sending a print-out of the drug card to clearly communicate this information.</p>		
Supply	<p>If sending to a mental health bed as a <u>new admission</u>: Please supply at least a 7 day supply of all medications. Consider a 14 to 28 day supply for specialist medications.</p> <p>If <u>returning</u> to a mental health bed: Please supply at least a 7 day supply of any new or altered medications.</p>		
Action for Medical Staff	Complete discharge letter, communicating changes to treatment and ongoing plans as above. Please also communicate whether any doses of “as required” have been given in the 24hour period prior to transfer. This is to prevent accidental overdose.		
Action for Pharmacy Staff	<p>Check discharge letter for accuracy.</p> <p>Ensure supply of at least 7 days of medications as above. Consider longer supply of red and amber medications or other medications which may be difficult to obtain.</p> <p>Consider providing a copy of the drug card in order to communicate doses given thus far that day. This is to prevent accidental overdose.</p>		
Action for Nursing Staff	Ensure patient is sent to the mental health trust with possessions, documentation and medications.		
Contact Details	<p>Liaison Team Durham: 01913333550</p> <p>Liaison Team Darlington: 01325736402</p> <p>Liaison Middlesborough: 01642838201</p> <p>Liaison Northallerton: 01609762070</p> <p>Liaison Stockton: 01642624318</p> <p>Liaison York: 01904721308</p>	<p>Durham pharmacy office: 0191 4415775</p> <p>Darlington pharmacy office: 01325 552105</p> <p>Roseberry Park pharmacy office: 01642 838360</p>	<p>Scarborough pharmacy office 01723 384638</p> <p>York pharmacy office: 0190 4717790</p>

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