MEDICATION POLICY

Introduction
As a domiciliary care agency we work on the basis that most of our service users will remain responsible for their own medication. Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited will become involved if it is contracted to do so and consistent with the outcomes of the needs and risks assessments and service user plans.

Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited will provide support and aids to enable safe self-administration wherever this is required or assist with the safe administration of service users’ medication requirements using suitably trained and competent staff. Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited insurance policies cover any liabilities arising out of its acceptance of responsibilities for assisting with service users’. To this end Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited adheres to Outcome: 9 of the Essential Standards of Quality and Safety: Management of Medicines and Regulation: 13 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010, which relates to protecting service users against the risks associated with the unsafe use and management of medicines.

Aim of Policy
This document explains the policy of Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited in respect of its employees who assist in the administration of service users' medication. It includes statements on:

(a) the circumstances in which they might be initially involved in medication administration
(b) the limits of their roles and responsibilities
(c) the procedures they are expected to follow
(d) the agency's arrangements for monitoring and supervising their work
(e) the training provision to ensure that they are competent in their role and responsibilities.

The registered person ensures there is a clear, written policy and procedure which is adhered to by staff and which identifies parameters and circumstances for assisting with medication and health-related tasks and identifies the limits to assistance and tasks which may not be undertaken without specialist training.
In formulating this policy the agency is also seeking to implement the principles laid down by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society in its guidance "The Handling of Medicines in Social Care" (2007).

1. People who use social care services have freedom of choice in relation to their provider of pharmaceutical care and services including dispensed medicines.

2. Care staff know which medicines each person has and the social care service keeps a complete account of medicines.

3. Care staff who help people with their medicines are competent.

4. Medicines are given safely and correctly, and care staff preserve the dignity and privacy of the individual when they give medicines to them.

5. Medicines are available when the individual needs them and the care provider makes sure that unwanted medicines are disposed of safely.

6. Medicines are stored safely.

7. The social care service has access to advice from a pharmacist.

8. Medicines are used to cure or prevent disease, or to relieve symptoms, and not to punish or control behaviour.

**Scope of Policy**

The policy applies to all employees who are contractually engaged to assist in the administration of service users' medication. Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited employees are not expected to assist in the administration of every service user's medication and will do so only if:

(a) it has been contractually agreed

(b) it is detailed on the service user plan

(c) they are competent through training to assist in the required or requested ways.

All employees are made aware of this policy and the procedures to be followed in the different circumstances in which they are expected or asked to assist in medication administration.

This Medication policy should be read and used in association with the agency's policies on Collection of Prescriptions and Non-Compliance with Medication.

**Definitions**

*Medication* for the purposes of this policy includes:
any medicines and drugs that have been prescribed for the service user by a qualified medical practitioner or nurse prescriber, which includes legally-controlled drugs

medication that might be administered through different routes other than orally, e.g. by injection or intravenously

any over the counter medicines and drugs obtained from a pharmacy and recommended by the pharmacist

any homely medicines such as pain relief tablets or cold remedies that the user has bought of their own accord

any homeopathic medicines that the service user might be taking with or without professional advice

creams, ointments and lotions that might be prescribed or bought over the counter.

Legislation
1. In formulating this policy and procedures Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited understands its obligation to comply fully with the relevant legislation concerning the prescribing, supply, storage and administration of medicines, which comes under such as the Medicines Act 1968, the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, the Misuse of Drugs (Safe Custody) Regulations 1973, Care Standards Act 2000 and Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations 2002. The agency is also mindful of the need to follow the code of practice issued with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in respect of decisions in respect of service users who might lack the mental capacity to accept responsibility for their own medication. (See also the agency’s policy on Working with Users who Might Lack Mental Capacity).


Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited itself does not employ registered nurses in nursing roles but it may work in circumstances in which nursing services are also being provided. In these instances the Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited’s staff may be working in co-operation with registered community nurses.

Where it does so Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited always seeks to ensure that NMC standards on medication administration are being achieved by being clear about its own staff’s roles and responsibilities.

Policy Statement

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Company Number: 5842342
In terms of the circumstances and parameters for assisting with the administration of medication in service users' own homes, Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited works on the basis that its staff will not be involved in the administration of a service user's medication (as defined above) unless:

(a) the service user has requested this service and it has been agreed within Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited's contract with the person

(b) a commissioning care manager as a result of their needs assessment has identified this as a service which the agency should provide as part of its contract

(c) Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited can ensure that it can provide staff who are competent to provide the service

Staff only provide assistance with taking medication or administer medication or undertake other health-related tasks, when it is within their competence; they have any necessary specialist training and it is:

- with the informed consent of the service user or their relatives or representative
- clearly requested on the support plan by a named assessor
- with agreement of the care or support workers' line manager and not contrary to the Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited's policy.

In many circumstances Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited may not be involved in helping with medication administration. It assumes that service users living in their own homes and independently have the right and responsibility to manage and administer their own medication if they wish. Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited however may in defined circumstances provide support and aids to enable safe self-administration or assume responsibility for more regular and routine administration. The agency's role varies from one situation to another.

As a first step following a request (e.g. from service user or care manager) Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited will agree in principle to provide this service if it has the capacity and capability to do so. Once Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited has reached agreement in principle to provide this service it carries out a risk assessment to identify any risks to both the service user and Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited's staff as a result of providing this service. The risk assessment is usually carried out by an Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited manager or competent person employed by it, working with the service user and any other professionals or agencies involved such as care manager or community nurse.

The registered person ensures that an assessment is undertaken, by a trained and qualified person, of the potential risks to service users and staff associated with delivering the package of care, (including, where appropriate, the risks associated with assisting with
medication and other health-related activities) before the care or support worker commences work and is updated annually or more frequently if necessary.

The risk assessment examines all possible risks to both the service user and Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited staff of the requested activities. Risks might be present at any stage in the process of dispensing, collecting, storage, administration, disposal and recording of medication. Particular attention is paid to situations where the service user:

- has multiple prescriptions
- is taking medication through different routes, e.g. oral administration and injections
- has fluctuating health, which is vulnerable to change
- does not have safe methods for storing drugs and medicines
- might be taking non-prescription medicines independently of any medical advice
- might not have the mental capacity to manage their own medication
- is looked after by someone whose mental capacity is questionable
- does not dispose of their medication safely.

Each risk identified is assessed for its severity and has a risk management plan to reduce and contain any risks and to establish who is to be responsible if any mistakes or maladministration occurs. Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited reserves the right to disclaim responsibility for mistakes that occur in relation to medication administration that does not form part of its contract, are not written into the service user plan or form part of the tasks to be carried out by Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited staff.

All requests for the Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited’s staff to help with the administration of medication within a service user plan are discussed with Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited managers before they are agreed. Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited managers make sure that the role being requested is appropriate and staff can perform the tasks safely and competently. They also make sure that the agreement is fully recorded in the contract entered into with the service user and the service user plan. Managers also instruct their staff to contact them if they are at any time and under any circumstances unsure of what to do regarding medication.

Procedures

Collection of medicines

In some circumstances it is permissible for Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited staff member to collect dispensed prescriptions for a service user. Where they do this the detailed activities are included on the service user plan and each occasion is recorded.

Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited only allows its staff to purchase over the counter medicines including creams and ointments in exceptional circumstances where requested by the service user as part of the agreed service. Staff should check with their...
supervisor/manager
a) that it is appropriate given the service user’s situation and needs
b) there are no risks in relation to any other medication, staff should seek advice from the pharmacists.
c) Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited’s procedures for handling service user’s money are strictly followed.

Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited does not allow its support staff to advise service users about what over the counter medicines, including homeopathic remedies to buy, but to ask them to seek the advice of a pharmacist or medical practitioner.

**Assistance with medication administration**
There are a number of circumstances in which the agency's staff could help to administer a service user's medication.

- Where the service user requests this and an agreement to proceed is written into the service user plan (following risk assessment etc).

- Where this is requested as part of the service by a care manager on the basis of a needs assessment and commissioning agreement and where the agency is the primary care provider. Under these circumstances there is usually no or limited involvement of other agencies such as community nurses in delivering the service user plan.

- Where the agency's staff is contributing to an integrated or multi-agency service involving other health care professionals. Under these circumstances medication is normally the responsibility of a registered nurse, who acts as the key professional co-ordinating a jointly agreed care plan. In accordance with NMC guidelines the responsible nurse(s) could under some circumstances “delegate” some of the administration to a designated and appropriately trained member of the agency’s staff.

In all these circumstances the agency agrees to provide any such help only if it can do so in accordance with legal requirements and its staff are competent to the level of help required. Where the help required is limited to basic or routine administration of such as tablets, liquids, creams and ointments and do not require specialised techniques for which specialised procedures are required, it follows procedures based on the latest RPSGB (2007) guidance as follows.

When administering medication, staff:
(a) check that the medication is written in the home care medical record or service user plan
(b) know the therapeutic use of the medication administered, its normal dose, side
effects, precautions and the contra-indications of its use

(c) check the identity of the service user to whom the medication is being given

(d) check that the prescription or the label on the medication is clear and unambiguous and relates to the service user in person

(e) check the expiry date

(f) check that the service user is not allergic to the medication

(g) check that the person is taking the medication as instructed

(h) keep clear and accurate signed records of all medication administered, withheld or refused in accordance with the agency's recording requirements

(i) Care and support workers record, with the user's permission, observation of the service user taking medication and any assistance given, including dosage and time of medication and undertaking any other health-related tasks, on the record of the care visit kept in the home and/or the Home Care Medication record and the personal file of the service user held in the agency. Any advice to the service user to see or call in their General Practitioner or other health care professional is also recorded. The record is signed and dated by the support worker and the service user or their representative.

Storage of medication

(i) Safety

Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited instructs its support staff involved in medication administration to ensure as far as possible that the medicines and drugs are stored safely and ensure they remain effective.

In terms of safety it follows Outcome: 9 of the Essential Standards of Quality and Safety which requires the medication to be kept in a safe place accessible to the service user or if direct access is not appropriate in a safe place accessible to the people who may need access such as relatives, health care professionals or other agency staff.

Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited ensures that the facilities used in any home and access arrangements are fully recorded on the service user plan and are always risk assessed.

(ii) Storage

In terms of storage Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited checks and recommends that the user stores their medicines and drugs so that the products are not damaged or compromised by:

- heat or dampness
• being mixed up with other people's medicines
• being stolen
• posing a risk to anyone else.

The agency follows RSPGB (2007) guidelines that extreme temperatures (hot and cold) or excessive moisture can cause deterioration of medicines, some being more susceptible than others. It does not recommend that medicines are kept in potentially damp or steamy places such as people's kitchens or bathrooms, which could reduce their effectiveness.

Records
A home care medicines record is kept in the home of every service user, who receives help with medication as part of their support plan.

Support staff are trained to record promptly and accurately all relevant details of the medication that they have administered or helped to administer.

Error reporting
Staff are instructed to report any mistake or error in administering drugs to a line manager or if the situation warrants it to the service user's medical practitioner without delay.

Staff must never, in any circumstances, administer medication which has not been prescribed, give medication to a service user against their wishes or alter in any way the timing or dosage of medications.

Monitoring of medication
Staff must be aware of the nature of the medication being taken by individual service users and should report any change in condition that may be due to medication or side-effects immediately to their line manager or supervisor or to the GP or community pharmacist.

Disposal of unwanted medication
Where staff are responsible they must dispose of all unwanted or surplus medication to the community pharmacist for disposal, obtain a receipt and record the information on the medicine chart.

Training
As a first step Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited requires all of its staff to read and demonstrate their understanding of the Premier Care (Plymouth) Limited's policy on the administration of medication and to learn how to keep medication records.

New staff are always trained to meet Skills for Care Common Induction Standards and staff who have had previous training regularly have their training updated.

Staff directly involved in the administration of medication receive accredited training in accordance with RPSGB guidance in:

(a) basic knowledge about common medications and how they are used
(b) how to recognise and deal with problems in use such as side-effects and contraindications.

(c) procedures for the administration, giving and storing of medicines. These include:
- Into the mouth (tablets, capsules, liquids)
- Into the ear, nose and eye drops
- Using inhalers
- Applied to the skin.

(d) what to do in the event of an error in administration.

The training is always provided by a qualified person in the administration of medication such as a community pharmacist or by an accredited training provider. Off the job training is supplemented by practice learning and supervision.

Staff who are involved in the more specialised aspects of medication administration such as injections and peg feed management receive further training to provide them with the competencies they need to perform at this higher level. The training follows RSPGB guidelines and Skills for Care knowledge set in medication administration requirements.