

Comments, compliments and complaints

NHS Dorset aims to provide the best possible care and treatment to patients. We welcome any feedback, including compliments or comments, as well as any concerns you may wish to raise. Should you require further advice or a prompt response to your concerns, please contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** for confidential support or guidance, on telephone **01305 361285** or email PALS@dorset-pct.nhs.uk

Should you wish to raise a formal complaint, please speak to the customer care manager on **01305 368914** or email complaints@dorset-pct.nhs.uk

You may also write to PALS and the customer care team at:
NHS Dorset, Vespasian House, 2nd Floor West Wing,
Bridport Road, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1TS

For an independent and confidential complaints service regarding services provided by NHS Dorset, please contact the **Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS)** for South West England on telephone **0845 120 3782** (local rate) or log on to www.adviceguide.org.uk/health

Staff safety

Most people welcome the help and care they receive from healthcare staff. NHS staff have the right to be treated with respect by everyone with whom they come into contact during the course of work. The NHS has a policy that anyone who threatens or behaves in a violent or aggressive way towards staff will be reported to the police.

Other formats

To order this leaflet in another format or language, please telephone the communications office on **01305 368040** or email communications@dorset-pct.nhs.uk
For details of Trust services and patient information leaflets, please log on to www.dorset.nhs.uk

Leaflet: Medicines Management / Changes to your medicines / SP 1032
Updated: June 2011

Changes to your medicines



This leaflet explains possible changes to your medicines

Changes to your medicines

Why are there changes to my medicines?

Changes to your medicines may be necessary for many reasons, including:

- New safety concerns
- New evidence about the benefits or risks of taking a drug
- New treatment guidelines
- Using a generic form of a medicine

Types of changes to medicines

Class switches

There may be several different drugs in the same group of medicines. When there is no difference in how effective the different drugs are, the cheapest drug in the group should be used.

Isomers

Sometimes a particular drug is available as a slightly different chemical form (called an “isomer”). Usually there is no advantage with using the isomer although it may be considerably more expensive.

Dose Changes

Sometimes a low strength of a medicine is prescribed twice a day. It is often just as effective, more convenient and less expensive to prescribe a higher strength once daily.

Generic Switches

All medicines have a “brand name” (or trade name) and a “generic name” (drug name). For example, paracetamol is the generic name for a widely used pain killer. “Panadol ®” is the name one company gives to its own brand of paracetamol. Generic medicines usually cost a lot less than their equivalent branded medicine.

Tablets and Capsules

Sometimes the same medicine may be available as both tablets and capsules. If there is a difference in cost, we will recommend that the less expensive product is prescribed.

Brand Switches

Sometimes it is important that patients receive a particular brand of a medicine. If such medicines are prescribed by the generic name we will try to switch to prescribing the brand.

What should I do if I am worried about a change in the appearance or name of my medicine?

Doctors and pharmacists can tell you more about any changes to your medicines. Discuss any worries or concerns with your doctor or pharmacist.

Summary

It is important that we make best use of the money we spend on medicines, without reducing the quality of the treatment patients receive.

If more money is spent on medicines than is available, the extra money has to come from other areas of healthcare. The changes described in this leaflet can save the NHS millions of pounds.

Making changes to your medicines does not mean that you are receiving a reduced quality service.

Generic medicines are **NOT** inferior to branded medicines.

All medicines are produced by companies who are subject to tight controls on quality.