

# Self-Administration of Medication in Hospital

## Information for patients

### What is self-administration of medication?

Usually, when you come into hospital the nursing/midwifery staff store and administer your medication. Self-administration of medication is when you, the patient, are given responsibility for safely storing and taking your own medicines whilst in hospital.

### What is the reason for self-administration?

If you usually take your medication independently at home, self-administration allows you to maintain your independence. If you are commencing new medication, self-administration enables you to:

- get to know your medicines and seek advice whilst you are in hospital
- identify any problems you might be having with your medicines
- take your medicines at more appropriate times, e.g. in relation to food, when pain occurs, at specific intervals.

### What does self-administration involve?

Firstly, you will be asked if you would like to participate in the scheme. It is voluntary - **you do not have to take part**. If you would like to participate, you will be assessed by a Registered Nurse (RN)/ Registered Midwife (RM) or pharmacist. They will ask you a few questions to identify if you are suitable for the scheme. If you are, they will discuss your medicines with you and ask you to sign a consent form.

If you are starting new medication, they will explain what the drug is for, when and how it should be taken, common side-effects and any special instructions. Initially you will be supervised when taking the new medication and once you are confident you will be responsible for taking the medication independently.

### How and where will the medicines be stored?

Medication must be stored out of reach of any children who may be visiting, and other patients on the ward, therefore your medicines will be locked in the medication cabinet at your bedside.

### How will I self-administer if I feel unwell or have sedation or an anaesthetic?

There are three levels of self-administration. You can move through the levels in either direction at any time, the staff will reassess this daily.

- **Level 1:** The RN/RM administers medicines from the medication cabinet. This level would apply to a patient having a procedure or operation when responsibility for the storage and administration of medicines passes to the nursing/midwifery staff temporarily.
- **Level 2:** The patient administers medicine **with** RN/RM supervision. This level would apply to someone who is getting familiar with new medication.
- **Level 3:** The patient administers medicine **without** supervision and has responsibility for keeping the key to the medication cabinet in a safe place out of sight. This level would apply to someone who is confident with his/her medication.

Please inform the RN, RM or pharmacist as soon as possible if you make an error with your medication, lose the key or someone tries to take your medication.

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**Please ensure you hand in the cabinet key when you are discharged.**

### **What if I am unsure about my medication?**

If you decide to self-administer, the staff will still be available to help you if you have any queries. **If you want to come off the scheme at any time, for any reason, you are free to do so**, just inform the RN/RN or pharmacist.

### **What about my normal medication?**

**Please bring all of your medication with you each time you come into hospital.** If you take something that has not been prescribed by a doctor, e.g. items bought from a pharmacy, herbal, homoeopathic or vitamin therapy, please ensure you bring these in too. You can use your own medication whilst in hospital. If your own medication is running out, you have not brought it in, or you start new medication, you will be given a supply from the Pharmacy.


### **How do I get a supply of medication for use after discharge?**

If you commence new medication whilst in hospital and this needs to continue after you are discharged, the hospital Pharmacy will dispense a two-week supply for you.

### **Further information and advice can be obtained from:**

The Pharmacy at Maidstone Hospital                      01622 224313  
The Pharmacy at Tunbridge Wells Hospital              01892 634281

**NHS 111**



 111

**NHS Choices online**

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

**MTW NHS Trust is committed to making its patient information accessible in a range of languages and formats. If you need this leaflet in another language or format please ask one of your clinical care team or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). We will do our best to arrange this.**

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust welcomes all forms of feedback from our service users. If the standard of service you have received from the Trust does not meet your expectations, we want to hear from you. Please speak with the ward manager or the nurse in charge in the first instance, or you can contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** on:

**Telephone:**     01622 224960 or  01892 632953

**Email:**            [mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net](mailto:mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net)

**or visit their office** at either Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells Hospital between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You can be confident that your care will not be affected by highlighting any areas of concern or making a complaint. The Trust will retain a record of your contact, which is held separately to any medical records. If you are acting on behalf of a patient, we may need to obtain the patient's consent in order to protect patient confidentiality. More information on PALS or making a complaint can be found on the Trust's website: [www.mtw.nhs.uk](http://www.mtw.nhs.uk) or pick up a leaflet from main reception.

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