

Request under Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for your request for information which we received on 27 April 2021.

I am pleased to confirm the following.

1. Please could you confirm whether in January 2020 you had any local guidance in place, which specifically considered, in an acute setting:

- the management of withdrawal from illicit drugs
- *and/or*
- the continuation of community substitution prescriptions for drug dependence (such as opioid substitution therapy)

and/or

- the initiation of such a prescription

The answer is we did not have a current policy to address the situations stated for illicit drugs in January 2020.

Our current Medicines Management policy states:

8.2 Suspected Illicit Substances

Illicit substances are illegal substances which include Schedule 1 Controlled Drugs. The Trust does not condone the use of illicit substances. In accordance with its duties under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 the Trust does not knowingly allow any activities in connection with illicit substances on its premises. When it is suspected that an illicit substance has been brought into the Trust by a visitor or patient, Trust staff may attempt to remove the illicit substance from the visitor or patient if it is safe to do so or otherwise wait until there is additional support from Trust Security Team and/or the police.

Once Trust staff are in possession of the illicit substance, the Trust Security Team and the police should be informed if that has not already occurred. Both the Nurse/Midwife/Healthcare Professional in Charge and the ward pharmacist should be informed of the incident if they are not aware. The ward pharmacist should inform the Duty Manager in Pharmacy Department and the Chief Pharmacist.

Under no circumstances may a suspected illicit substance be returned to any person as “property” as this may constitute a criminal offence. The illicit substance must be treated as a Controlled Drug

and stored in the CD cupboard. The illicit substance must be entered into the Patients Own Drug Controlled Drug Book. This can be done by a staff nurse/midwife or pharmacist. The entry should be clear and concise.

A Datix incident should be submitted with the details of the illicit substance. The illicit substance must be notified to the police for their actions and entered out of the Patients Own Drug CD book by a staff nurse/midwife or pharmacist when given to the police. This entry should be countersigned by the police and when the illicit substance is handed over to them. In the event that this incident occurs out of pharmacy working hours, the Pharmacy Department should be informed the following working day.

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If you are unhappy with the information received in response to this request, please address your complaint to the Patient Affairs Office at Milton Keynes Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Standing Way, Eaglestone, Milton Keynes MK6 5LD If, after exhausting our internal process, you are still unhappy with the information received, you may write to the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

If you need any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us at the address above.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Co-ordinator
For and on behalf of Milton Keynes Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

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