Collaborative Pharmacological Care of Patients

Resolving Disputes Between Doctors and Pharmacists.

Background.

Pharmacological treatment has become increasingly complex and often requires the input of the multidisciplinary team to administer and monitor the chosen therapy. Within the team, doctors are recognised as the experts in assessment and diagnosis. Complementary to the doctors’ role, pharmacists (and in particular specialist and lead pharmacists) should be recognised as experts in pharmacology and in the review of prescribed treatment to identify appropriate indications, (including off-licence), interactions, contra-indications and therapeutic duplication.

Resulting from this approach, there is no doubt that patients are best served when doctors and pharmacists are collaborative in the delivery of care and when they fully recognise and respect each other's role. Where responsibilities are complementary and supportive, pharmaceutical care can be optimised and medicines will be used more appropriately, with reduced risk of medication-related morbidity and mortality.

Resolution of Disputes.

Where difficulties arise in the doctor-pharmacist relationship, these must be addressed as soon as possible so that patient care is not compromised. Therefore, a process is required, agreed by both disciplines, to aid the swift resolution of any conflict and/or barriers to an effective working collaboration.

This process has been agreed by the Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Pharmacist (Governance & Professional Practice).

(Approved by the Drugs & Therapeutics Group – July 2016).

Process.

See overleaf.

Version 1 - July 2016

Reviewed – August 2018

Next review – August 2021
Non-collaborative concern or competency issue identified

Does this pose an immediate threat to patient safety?

NO

Discuss concern and agree a process to resolve the issue

Is the issue resolved?

NO

Continue to work on resolution. Include more senior doctor / pharmacist where necessary.

Is issue resolved? Was concern an isolated incident?

NO

Has an impasse been reached? Have similar concerns been repeated? Are concerns of long-standing?

Chief Pharmacist and Chief Medical Officer to meet with both parties to agree an action plan.

YES

Discuss in supervision and record.

YES

Discusses concern and agrees a process to resolve the issue

Is the issue resolved?

YES

Discuss in supervision and record.

NO

Continue to work on resolution. Include more senior doctor / pharmacist where necessary.

Is issue resolved? Was concern an isolated incident?

YES

Pharmacist to bring to attention of Chief Pharmacist. Doctor to bring to the attention of the Chief Medical Officer.

NO

Has an impasse been reached? Have similar concerns been repeated? Are concerns of long-standing?

Chief Pharmacist and Chief Medical Officer to meet with both parties to agree an action plan.