

Welcome to the latest edition of our Medicines Safety Bulletin; a newsletter produced by your local Medication Safety Group. Our aim is to highlight to you medication incidents that have occurred both locally and nationally to promote and support safer practice.

World Patient Safety Day & Falls Prevention Week

As the World Health Organisation World Patient Safety Day and the UK Falls Prevention Week both occur during September, this is a good opportunity to share some new and some existing resources on these topics.

Falls and fall-related injuries are a common and serious problem for older people. Whilst there can be many contributing factors, the use of certain medications is recognised as a major and modifiable risk factor for falls. The human cost of falling includes distress, pain, injury, loss of confidence, loss of independence and mortality. Falling also affects the family members and carers of people who fall. Falls are estimated to cost the NHS more than £2.3 billion per year. Falling, therefore has an impact on quality of life, health and healthcare costs.

New Medicines and Falls Resource

Pharmacists from the National Falls Prevention Co-ordination Group have produced a document which contains information and guidance on reviewing medicines for people at risk of falls. It is hosted on the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's medicines optimisation page [here](#)

It is designed as a tool to support clinicians to navigate a complex area of pharmacy and patient safety. Medication review in people at risk of falls is often not straight forward as they will often have multiple co-morbidities, be older and/or be living with frailty. Medicines use in this population therefore requires a balance between the risks and benefits of multiple treatments. The document suggests a process for anyone reviewing medicines for people at risk of falls to work through.

It has a helpful list of 'falls-risk-increasing-drugs' (FRIDs) in Appendix 1, with a description of the effect each medication may have on a person's falls risk.

Some medicines may increase the risk of fracture and therefore should also be reviewed in people at risk of falls. Medicines that cause or contribute to fractures are listed on pages 9 and 10, with a description of the mechanism of causation.

Further Resources for Medication Reviews

The document above contains many useful references. In addition there are a number of medication review resources and tools on our website [here](#).

Click on the section entitled '**Resources to support medication reviews**' to view the full list.

STOPPFall

(Screening Tool of Older Persons Prescriptions in older adults with high FALL risk)

Last year PrescQIPP published a [bulletin](#) describing the use of the STOPPFall screening tool. This aims to support prescribers in deprescribing FRIDs and outlines where to consider withdrawal of medication, where a stepwise withdrawal is needed and whether monitoring is advised after deprescribing.

The bulletin also contains clinical system searches for medication and falls and has user guides for both SystemOne and EMIS Web.

Falls Practitioner Network

For anyone with an interest in this area of work, FutureNHS hosts a Falls Practitioner Network [here](#) (requires log in to FutureNHS and you will need to request to join the workspace)

This is a new forum for clinicians to share good practice, guidance documents plus a discussion forum to ask questions.

North Yorkshire and York Medicines Safety Bulletins

Past editions of the local Medicines Safety Bulletins may be found [here](#). Previous topics related to falls risk include medication errors with rivastigmine patches, citalopram oral drops safety update, fentanyl patch safety information, and a change to the licensed dose of zopiclone dose in patients with hepatic dysfunction.

Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership - Pharmacy Network

Further resources on can be found on the [Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership - Pharmacy Network - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#) and where we also encourage you to share resources you find useful.

See [here](#) for details on how to access and navigate around the platform.

This bulletin has been produced by the North Yorkshire and York CCGs Medicines Management Teams on behalf of the North Yorkshire and York Medicines Safety Group. If you have any queries or feedback relating to the bulletin, we can be contacted using the Rxline mailbox: hnyicb-ny.rxline@nhs.net

We also welcome any suggestions or ideas you may have for future editions of this bulletin.

The information contained in this bulletin is correct as of September 2023 but as advice and guidelines are subject to change, please ensure that you refer to and adhere to whatever advice and guidelines are currently in place at the time of reading.