

To: Community Pharmacists

**Directorate of Integrated Care
Western Office**

Gransha Park House
15 Gransha Park
Clooney Road
LONDONDERRY
BT47 6FN

Tel : 028 9536 3375

Fax : 028 9536 1166

Web Site:

www.hscboard.hscni.net

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Dear Colleague

STORAGE AND DENATURING OF MEDICINES FOR DISPOSAL

All community pharmacies within Northern Ireland are contracted by the HSCB to provide a service to accept for disposal any medication returned by members of the public. An incident has been reported to the HSCB where an out of date controlled drug was removed without consent from a pharmaceutical waste bin in a community pharmacy by a member of the staff and taken from the pharmacy.

Learning from the incident has highlighted the following points:

- The Medicines (Pharmacies) (Responsible Pharmacist) Regulations 2008 detail that Pharmacy Procedures must cover as a minimum, arrangements to ensure that medicinal products are disposed of, in a safe and effective manner
- Pharmacies should have a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) relating to the management of clinical waste which each member of staff should read, understand and sign to confirm that they will comply with it. It should be highlighted to all staff that once medication is placed in a pharmaceutical waste bin, it should **NEVER** be removed.
- All medicinal waste should be placed in dedicated pharmaceutical waste bins. It is important that both open bins which are in use and closed sealed bins waiting collection for disposal are stored safely and in a secure place away from areas of public access within the

pharmacy premises. Bins should be stored in an area of the pharmacy where they are in view of the pharmacist.

- Controlled Drugs in Schedules 2, 3 and 4 (part 1) should be denatured and rendered irretrievable before disposal in clinical waste. This means that all medication needs to be removed from its packaging e.g. liquid or powder from ampoules, tablets or capsules from blister or foil package and then denatured before disposal. Wherever practicable, CD denaturing kits should be used and the used denaturing kits should then be placed in pharmaceutical waste bins. Regardless of the methods used for denaturing, pharmacists must take measures to ensure safety of personnel and non-contamination of the environment.

For further information please refer to:

HSCB Guidance on the Management of Clinical Waste in Community Pharmacy <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2589.htm> .

If you have any queries about this, please contact your local pharmaceutical services adviser.

Yours sincerely,



Joe Brogan
Assistant Director of Integrated Care
Head of Pharmacy and Medicines Management

Contact details for Local Integrated Care Offices:

Belfast	South Eastern	Southern	Northern	Western
12-22 Linenhall Street Belfast BT2 8BS Tel: 028 9536 3926	12-22 Linenhall Street Belfast BT2 8BS Tel: 028 9536 3926	Tower Hill Armagh. BT61 9DR Tel: 028 9536 2104	County Hall 182 Galgorm Road Ballymena BT42 1QB Tel: 028 9536 2849	Gransha Park House 15 Gransha Park Clooney Road Londonderry BT47 6FN Tel: 028 9536 1010