

# Joint working between Medicines Information and the Pharmacy Governance Team has resulted in actions to improve patient experience and medicines safety.



## Introduction

The Medicines Helpline provides a service to patients discharged from University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust to answer enquiries relating to their discharge medicines. In October 2020, the Medicines Information team implemented processes to enable regular reporting of errors identified via this service. Since February 2021 quarterly reporting of these errors to the Trust Safe Medicines Practice Group has influenced discussions at Trust level. The Medicines Information team has worked collaboratively with the pharmacy governance team, and wider Trust Patient Safety team resulting in demonstrable outcomes to improve medication safety.

## Key Outcomes

### 1. Improved documentation on discharge letters.

- Poor discharge documentation regarding medication changes identified.
- ➡ Change to the electronic prescribing system.
- ➡ Improved quality of medicines reconciliation at discharge with associated documentation.

### 2. Improved discharge with respect to medicines.

- General themes resulting in safety issues with respect to medicines identified.
- ➡ Trust ‘Lesson of the Month’ focusing on discharging patients safely with medicines.
- ➡ Nurses received additional communication with education around discharge processes.
- ➡ Improvement in medication issues originating from the wards (Table 1).

Table 1 - Ward discharge errors reported through the helpline

	% of total incidents		
	Feb - Apr 21	Feb - Apr 22	Feb - Apr 23
Ward discharge errors	20%	6%	7%

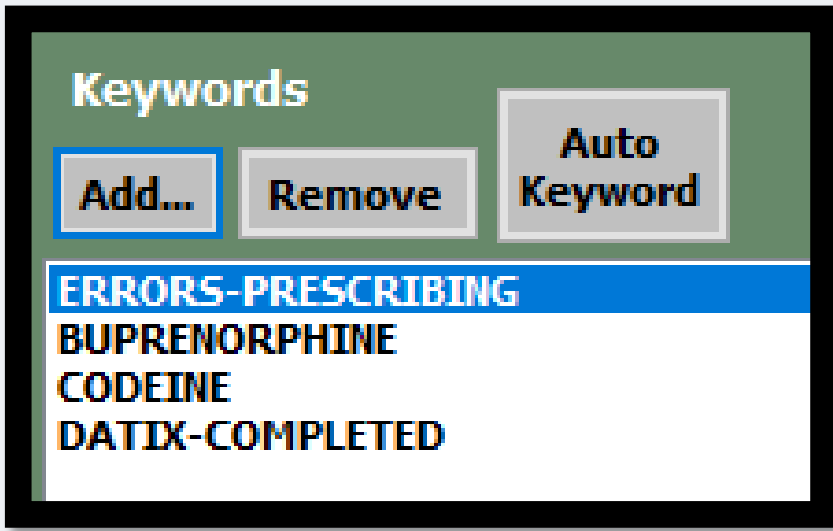
#### What next?

- A need for improved discharge medication counselling has been identified. We are working with the pharmacy governance team to develop resources.
- Issues with analgesia prescribing at discharge identified. We have worked with the MSO and governance team to produce a Patient Safety Notice on prescribing analgesia on discharge.

**Medicines Helpline**

If you have any questions or concerns about your medication, please call the Medicines Helpline on 0121 424 4682 (Monday to Friday, 10 am – 3 pm). For non-medicines related questions contact the hospital switchboard on 0121 371 2000

MiDatabank keywords used to enable easier reporting of errors identified via the Medicines Helpline.



Regular reporting highlights themes and areas for improvement to facilitate safer discharges.

Table 2 – Incident Categories

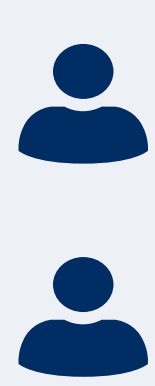
Incident Category	% of total incidents (May 22 – Apr 23)
Prescription errors	21% (n=264)
Dispensing errors	<1% (n=9)
Ward discharge errors	8% (n=100)
Transfer of care errors	70% (n=858)

Learning from the helpline increases awareness of issues resulting from poor practice:

- ☐ Case studies are included in pharmacy newsletter.
- ☐ Content included at pharmacy induction, pharmacist trainee and foundation level training.



## Contributing to Medicines Safety at University Hospitals Birmingham



Katy Davies, Advanced Clinical Pharmacist – Medicines Information, [katy.davies@uhb.nhs.uk](mailto:katy.davies@uhb.nhs.uk)  
Rishvana Mohamed, Specialist Clinical Pharmacist – Medicines Information, [rishvana.mohamed@uhb.nhs.uk](mailto:rishvana.mohamed@uhb.nhs.uk)

