

 GIG CYMRU NHS WALES Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board	BCUHB Pharmacy and Medicines Management Standard Operating Procedure(SOP) for Care Home (Residential and Nursing) Management of Medicines that require refrigeration
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Date to be reviewed		Number of pages	
Author(s)	Medicines Management Nurses Primary Care & Community Services		
Responsible department/director	Pharmacy and Medicines Management		
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Documents to be read alongside this policy	1. Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and North Wales Local Authorities Joint Agreement for a Code of Practice for the Management of Medicines in health and social care settings May 2016 2. Standards of best practice and standard operating procedures for medicines management for all care settings for adults May 2016 3. RPS (2018) Professional Guidance on the Administration of Medicines in Healthcare Settings 4. RPS (2019) Safe and Secure Handling of Medicines 5. BCUHB Medicines Policy			
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SOP approved/rejected	Ratification signature	Date

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL GUIDANCE

It is important to ensure that all medicines are stored safely and as per the manufacturer's guidance. Some medication requires storage within a refrigerator because if stored at room temperature they can break down and become ineffective (won't work as they should).

It is important that if you are responsible for the management of medicines that you are aware of how to find out what medicines require special storage, such as refrigeration. The following resources can be used to check about storage specifics, the packaging, the patient information leaflet (PIL) supplied, community pharmacy (if receive supply from them) or dispensary at GP surgery. If you need a copy of a PIL, contact your pharmacist/GP dispensary or downloadable copies can be found at electronic medicines compendium (EMC): www.medicines.org.uk.

- All medicines need to be stored securely and safely, including those that are to be refrigerated. The fridge should be lockable and secured within a locked room (medicines room).
- Domestic fridges are not suitable to store medicines within care settings, the medicines fridge should **only** be used for medicines (do not keep any food or pathology samples in medicines fridge). Specialised fridges are available for the storage of medicines and must be used for vaccines and diluents. Vaccines should **NOT** be stored in domestic refrigerators. For further information on vaccine storage if required please refer to The Green Book. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immunisation-against-infectious-disease-the-green-book>
- All medicines fridges should be serviced at least yearly ensuring that the digital thermometer is calibrated to ensure it is recording correctly.
- Medicines that require refrigeration when received within the care home should be immediately identified and stored within the medicines fridge.
- The plug socket of the fridge should be clearly marked with a label **“do not switch off medicines fridge”** to prevent the fridge from inadvertently being switched off at the wall. (Some fridges can be directly wired to prevent this from occurring)
- It is important to ensure the fridge is kept tidy, with medicines being stored in an orderly fashion on shelves, and not on the floor of the unit, or within the door of the unit. It is important to avoid overfilling ensuring that a space is kept between boxes and vials to maintain proper circulation. **Do not keep large amounts** of medicines in the fridge, only the minimal required, as this can lead to inadequate air flow and potential freezing. Please note that it is important that medicines do not touch the cooling plate in the back of the fridge.
- It is important that any medicines stored in the fridge are regularly checked to ensure they are still in date and the stock received is rotated.

- It is important to ensure that as part of the cleaning rota of the home that the cleaning of the fridge is included and dates of when this has taken place are recorded. The home policy should state where the fridge contents should be refrigerated whilst cleaning takes place.
- To ensure that the contents of the medicines fridge are safe to be administered it is important that the temperatures are accurately monitored using a thermometer which measures both the minimum & maximum temperature. The thermometer, or its temperature monitoring probes should be sited in a central location within the fridge, preferably between the products - they should not be placed in the door (please note many medicines fridges have an in built thermometer). It is important that these thermometers whether they are stand alone or in built, are calibrated to ensure they are recording accurately on a yearly basis.
- The fridge temperature should be checked and recorded daily. It is recommended that the minimum and maximum temperatures and the current temperature are all recorded.
- It is vital to ensure staff taking the thermometer readings understand how to read them correctly and reset the thermometer, be aware of why this is necessary and what action if any is required if a problem arises.

2.0 DAILY TEMPERATURE RECORDING

- Fridge temperatures are required to be checked and recorded on a **daily basis**.
- The minimum, maximum and current temperatures should be recorded from the digital display
- The fridge temperature range must be kept between the range of **+2°C and +8°C**
- If the fridge temperature is outside of this range action should be taken immediately, see below for what action is required should this happen.

3.0 ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN IF THE FRIDGE TEMPERATURES ARE OUT OF RANGE

- Ensure that the person in charge at the time of discovery and the care home manager are aware
- Whilst advice is being sought quarantine the stock in the fridge i.e. no administration of the medicines contained within the fridge should take place until it is confirmed it is safe to do so.
- Make sure that all staff that are involved in the management of medicines are aware by placing a sign on the fridge “**do not use**”.
- Try to determine the length of time that the temperature of the fridge would have been out of range, and make sure you have a list of the stock affected.
- Seek advice from your Local Medicines Information Service based in the Pharmacy Departments of Wrexham Maelor Hospital, Ysbyty Glan Clwyd,

Ysbyty Gwynedd ; they may need to contact the manufacturer for further advice.

- If the stock of medicines can no longer be administered then it is important to ensure that it is disposed of safely and correctly.
- Ensure that the reason for the out of range temperature is resolved i.e. call out and engineer to repair the fridge if required.
- If the medication has to be disposed of contact the prescriber as soon as possible to ensure that they prescribe a replacement and treatment is not delayed.
- Ensure that all actions around the event are documented.

Daily Fridge Temperature Recording Sheet

Please ensure that each day the following is recorded: current, minimum and maximum fridge temperatures (°C). **PLEASE NOTE: to reset the thermometer after each recording is taken**



If the fridge temperature is outside the normal range of +2°C and +8°C, ensure that the appropriate steps are taken and inform care home manager, make sure advice is sought immediately.

Date	Time	Current fridge temp °C (Range 2°C-8°C)	Minimum temp °C	Maximum temp °C	Thermometer reset	Action taken if outside of Range 2°C-8°C	Checked by Print & sign

Date the fridge was cleaned (and defrosted if required):