

Improving Transitions of Care Upon Admission to Hospital: The Role for Community Pharmacy Professionals

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 Pharmacy Connection

Community pharmacy professionals are often relied upon to provide medication lists to hospitals when one of their patients are admitted. This information helps form the care provided to the patient.

A good practice is for the pharmacist to assess the list before sending to ensure it reflects the most up to date information you have on what medication the patient is taking, including the dose and frequency, and check for duplication and other drug therapy problems.

Community pharmacists and pharmacy technicians could consider the following when reviewing and sending the list:

IS THE INFORMATION UP TO DATE?

- Adjust any dosage or frequency discrepancies.
- For short term medications, like antibiotics, provide the anticipated stop date.

IS THE INFORMATION COMPLETE?

- Relevant information is often found within various tabs on the patient's profile, individual transaction notes or internal pharmacy notes but those areas may not be automatically incorporated into a medication list.
- It can be helpful to know how the patient is filling their prescriptions (i.e., blister pack or regular medication vials).
- If aware that the patient uses multiple pharmacies, that can be flagged for the hospital.

IS THERE OTHER INFORMATION RELATED TO THE PATIENT AND THEIR MEDICATION THAT WOULD HELP IN THEIR CARE? FOR EXAMPLE:

- Any allergies, adverse reactions or intolerances and their nature.
- Contact information for the patient's caregiver or family member, if appropriate.
- Details about medications that require daily dispensing or are administered with long intervals.
- Information about the patient's level of compliance with their medication.
- Use of over-the-counter medications or natural health products.
- Any recent drug therapy problems.
- Known medical conditions.
- Known monitoring parameters (e.g., BP, eGFR, BG, HbA1C).

COLLABORATION IS KEY

Good collaboration between community and hospital can assist in preventing adverse drug events and supporting high-quality appropriate patient care. Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are encouraged to work closely with their local colleagues to understand any barriers to information-sharing and care, and work together to resolve them.