

Pharmacy Department

Self administration of medicines

What is self-administration?

Self-administration of medicines (known as SAM) is a programme used on this ward to help you to maintain your independence with your medicine taking and to improve your knowledge about your medication where required. This may help you cope more easily with your medication once you get home.

If you self-administer in hospital it gives you the opportunity to take your own medicines either independently or under supervision. In order to do this your nurse and the pharmacist will give you as much information, help and supervision as you need. We will ask you how you are getting on and check that you remain fit and well enough each day, to self-administer your medicines.

What are the benefits of self-administration?

Through this programme we aim to help you to:

- Maintain your independence with your medicine taking.
- Understand the purpose of your medicines.
- Understand how to take your medicines safely.
- Understand more about your condition and general health.

Who can I talk to about self-administration?

Before you take part in this programme you will have the chance to discuss with your nurse exactly what self-administration involves and what the possible benefits will be for you. You can also speak to the ward pharmacy staff about your medicines and the self-administration scheme.

Can I choose not to self-administer?

Self –Administration is not compulsory and you must not feel that you have to take part even if asked.

What should I expect to happen?

If you are asked and agree to take part, then before starting a nurse or a pharmacist will, where appropriate:

- Explain self-administration to you more fully
- Explain which medicines you will be taking
- Explain the dosage
- Explain any possible side effects

You may also be supplied with an information sheet that lists all the medicines you are taking with a brief description of what they are for, to use as a reminder.

Your own medicines from home will be used where suitable. Any other regular or new medicines that you require will be given to you from the hospital pharmacy. Each container will have on it your name, the name of the medicine and instructions on how to take it.

If you forget what medicines you have taken or if you have any queries then please talk to your nurse.

What are my responsibilities whilst self-administering?

- Keep your medications locked in the appropriate cabinet, and keep the key safe.
- Check the prescription chart or tick chart for changes before taking each dose of medication.
- Initial the appropriate box on the prescription chart or tick the appropriate box on the tick chart, after taking each dose.
- Inform your nurse/doctor/pharmacist if anything is unclear, or if you suspect anything is incorrect.
- Only take the medicines we have prescribed for you.
- Ask your nurse for any 'as required' medicines, injections, or other medicine to which you do not have access.
- Inform your nurse or doctor if you need increasing amounts of 'as required' medication.
- Alert your nurse/pharmacist/pharmacy technician if your supply of medication becomes low.
- Return the key to your medicine locker to your nurse before you go home.

How will my medicines be kept safe?

Your medicines will be locked in your bedside locker. You will be given a key to the locker when you are taking your medication independently (the nurse, pharmacist and pharmacy technician will be the only other people with access to your medication).

It is your responsibility to keep your medicines locked in your bedside locker and to keep the key in a safe place.

If any visitor or patient tries to take your medicines, please call a nurse at once.

What happens when I go home?

A prescription will be written and the medicines in your locker will be checked against it by Pharmacy.

Please remember to give the key to your bedside locker to your nurse before going home.



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

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