

Dr Jim Livingstone
Director of Safety, Quality and Standards

Dr Norman Morrow
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Best Practice Guidance

Subject:

Safer practice with epidural injections and infusions

For action by:

Chief Executive, HSC Board
Chief Executive, HSC Trusts
Chief Pharmacists, HSC Board/ Trusts

For Info:

Director of Primary Care, HSC Board for cascade to

- Prescribing advisers; and
- GP advisers

Director of Performance Management, HSC Board
Assistant Director of Performance Management, HSC Board
Chief Executive, Public Health Agency
Director of Public Health, Public Health Agency
Medical Director NIAS
Directors of Nursing, HSC Trusts
Chief Executive, RQIA
Director, Safety Forum
NI Medicines Governance Team
Prof. David Woolfson, Head of School of Pharmacy, QUB
Prof. Donald Burden, Director of Education, School of Dentistry
Prof. Linda Johnston, Head of Nursing & Midwifery, QUB
Prof. Hugh McKenna, Head of Life and Health Sciences, UU
Dr Owen Barr, Head of School of Nursing, UU
Prof. Paul McCarron, Head of School of Pharmacy, UU
Chief Executives NIMDTA, NICPPET, NIPEC
Regional Medicines Information Service

Summary of Contents:

The purpose of this Circular is draw your attention to the templates for epidural prescription, administration and monitoring records.

Enquiries:

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Department of
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and Public Safety**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

**Circular Reference: HSC (SQSD) 28/07
Addendum 03/09**

Date of issue: 13 August 2009

Related documents

HSC (SQSD) 28/07 NPSA Safe Medication Alerts

HSC (SQSD) 28/07 Addendum 01/08

HSC (SQSD) 28/07 Addendum 02/08

Recommendations for implementation in Northern Ireland

Superseded documents

N/A

Status of Contents:

Best Practice Guidance

SQSD material can be accessed on:
<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/phealth/sqs.htm>

Working for a Healthier People

Chief Medical Officer Group



Dear colleagues

National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) Alert 21 – Safer practice with epidural injections and infusions

In August 2008 the Department issued Addendum 2/08 to Circular HSC (SQSD) 28/2007 relating to safer practice with epidural injections and infusions which included the Regional Working Group's recommendations for implementation in Northern Ireland.

At that time, the Regional Working Group identified that a number of different documents were being used across Northern Ireland for the prescription, administration and monitoring of epidurals. As a result, a Regional Epidural Sub-group was convened to develop template documents to promote greater consistency in the documentation used by HSC Trusts. The Terms of Reference of the Group is attached at **Appendix 1**.

This work has now been completed and compliments the Regional Working Group's recommendations. It is anticipated that this will be of use to Trusts when developing their epidural charts. The templates and associated notes are attached at **Appendix 2**.

You will wish to bring the contents of this document and all related documents to the attention of staff, particularly those involved in governance and risk management within your organisation who need to be aware of this and similar alerts in order to assist in complying with the *Quality Standards for Health & Social Care* –

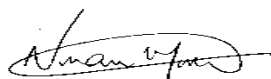
- Criterion 5.3.1(f)(viii) and (ix) (ensuring safe practice and appropriate management of risk); and
- Criterion 5.3.3(f) (implementation of evidence-based practice through guidance, for example, NPSA guidance).

Finally, may we take this opportunity to acknowledge all the work that has been done to date in improving medication safety across Northern Ireland including this latest contribution by the Regional Epidural Sub-group.

Yours sincerely



DR J F Livingstone
Safety, Quality and Standards Directorate



Dr Norman C Morrow
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

Regional Epidural Sub-group

Terms of reference

Group members

Dr Susan Atkinson, Consultant Anaesthetist, BHSCT
Mrs Anne Burns, Paediatric Pharmacist, BHSCT
Mrs June Bradley, Lead Nurse, Acute Pain Service, WHSCT
Mrs Patricia Coulter, Acute Paediatric Pain Nurse, BHSCT
Mrs Jane Doyle, Lead Nurse, Acute Pain Service, SHSCT
Ms Cheryl Ferguson, Acute Pain Pharmacist, SEHSCT (November 2008 – January 2009)
Mr Simon Higgs, Lead Nurse, Acute Pain Service, SEHSCT
Dr Damien Hughes, Consultant Anaesthetist, SEHSCT
Mrs Erika Hughes, Acute Pain Pharmacist, SEHSCT (until November 2008)
Dr Aideen Keaney, Consultant Paediatric Anaesthetist, BHSCT
Dr Kathleen Kelly, Consultant Anaesthetist, WHSCT
Mrs Louise MacDonald, Acute Paediatric Pain Nurse, BHSCT
Mrs Olga O'Neill, Lead Nurse, Acute Pain Service, BHSCT
Dr Karen Pillow, Consultant Anaesthetist, NHSCT
Miss Jillian Redpath, Medicines Governance Pharmacist, SHSCT (Chair)

Remit

- To review all available documents currently used for prescription, administration and monitoring of epidural infusions in each Trust.
- To identify key elements that must be included in documents for prescription, administration and monitoring of epidural infusions.
- To develop a template document for prescription, administration and monitoring of epidural infusions.

Appendix 2

Templates for epidural prescription, administration and monitoring records

Option 1: Pre-printed stickers for prescription and administration record of new infusion bag – for attachment to regional Kardex template

Continuous EPIDURAL infusion prescription				Administration: Record of new infusion bag commenced				
LEVO bupivacaine 1mg/ml (0.1%) + FENTANYL 2 microgram/ml Sodium chloride 0.9%			250ml infusion	Date				Record rate and volume administered at each check, rate change or bolus on epidural section of MEWS
Start rate	Rate (Range)	PCEA / Bolus (circle)	Lockout	Time				
.....ml/hour	.....ml/hour	.....ml	.....minute	Volume			
Signature (sign over sticker and Kardex & print name)			Start date	Stop date	Signature	Rate		
						Pump ID number		
						Signatures		

Continuous EPIDURAL infusion prescription				Administration: Record of new infusion bag commenced				
LEVO bupivacaine 1mg/ml (0.1%) + FENTANYL 2 microgram/ml Sodium chloride 0.9%			100ml infusion	Date				Record rate and volume administered at each check, rate change or bolus on epidural section of MEWS
Start rate	Rate (Range)	PCEA / Bolus (circle)	Lockout	Time				
.....ml/hour	.....ml/hour	.....ml	.....minute	Volume			
Signature (sign over sticker and Kardex & print name)			Start date	Stop date	Signature	Rate		
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Continuous EPIDURAL infusion prescription				Administration: Record of new infusion bag commenced				
LEVO bupivacaine 1mg/ml (0.1%) + FENTANYL 5 microgram/ml Sodium chloride 0.9%			250ml infusion	Date				Record rate and volume administered at each check, rate change or bolus on epidural section of MEWS
Start rate	Rate (Range)	PCEA / Bolus (circle)	Lockout	Time				
.....ml/hour	.....ml/hour	.....ml	.....minute	Volume			
Signature (sign over sticker and Kardex & print name)			Start date	Stop date	Signature	Rate		
						Pump ID number		
						Signatures		

Continuous EPIDURAL infusion prescription				Administration: Record of new infusion bag commenced				
LEVO bupivacaine 1.25mg/ml (0.125%) Sodium chloride 0.9%			100ml infusion	Date				Record rate and volume administered at each check, rate change or bolus on epidural section of MEWS
Start rate	Rate (Range)	PCEA / Bolus (circle)	Lockout	Time				
.....ml/hour	.....ml/hour	.....ml	.....minute	Volume			
Signature (sign over sticker and Kardex & print name)			Start date	Stop date	Signature	Rate		
						Pump ID number		
						Signatures		

Continuous EPIDURAL infusion prescription				Administration: Record of new infusion bag commenced				
LEVO bupivacaine 1.25mg/ml (0.125%) Sodium chloride 0.9%			200ml infusion	Date				Record rate and volume administered at each check, rate change or bolus on epidural section of MEWS
Start rate	Rate (Range)	PCEA / Bolus (circle)	Lockout	Time				
.....ml/hour	.....ml/hour	.....ml	.....minute	Volume			
Signature (sign over sticker and Kardex & print name)			Start date	Stop date	Signature	Rate		
						Pump ID number		
						Signatures		

Continuous EPIDURAL infusion prescription				Administration: Record of new infusion bag commenced				
ROPIVACAINE 2mg/ml			200ml infusion	Date				Record rate and volume administered at each check, rate change or bolus on epidural section of MEWS
Start rate	Rate (Range)	PCEA / Bolus (circle)	Lockout	Time				
.....ml/hour	.....ml/hour	.....ml	.....minute	Volume			
Signature (sign over sticker and Kardex & print name)			Start date	Stop date	Signature	Rate		
						Pump ID number		
						Signatures		

Notes on templates

Two options are given for the prescription and administration record of a new infusion bag. Both options facilitate a consistent approach to prescription while accommodating differences in documentation, for example, not all Trusts have a separate epidural MEWS/PEWS chart while other Trusts do not use adhesive labels.

Option 1: The template is designed for use with the regional kardex template. Some minor adjustments in size may be necessary to fit the spacing on the kardex in use in individual Trusts. DHSSPS Pharmaceutical Inspectorate have advised that Use and Control of Medicines (April 2004), which recommends that pre-printed adhesive labels are not acceptable for a prescription, has now been superseded by an update to the Misuse of Drugs Regulations (2007). The regulations allow for pre-printed adhesive stickers to be used for a prescription provided that the signature is 'oversigned', that is the signature must be written in such a way as to cover both the sticker and the kardex. The stickers have been designed to accommodate this. A sticker has been produced for each of the pre-prepared epidural infusions included in the recommendations of the Regional Working Group.

Option 2: The template is designed for printing on the reverse of an epidural MEWS/PEWS chart where this is in use and requires prescription details to be handwritten in accordance with Use and Control of Medicines. Where only one local anaesthetic is in use, the local anaesthetic may be pre-printed as part of the prescription. The template allows for one prescription change. The prescription must be referenced on the medicine kardex according to Trust policy. Training in use of the prescription should incorporate guidance that where no opioid is included in the prescription, a line should be drawn through that part of the prescription or 'None' written to prevent addition after the prescription has been written. Where ropivacaine is prescribed, a line should be drawn through sodium chloride.

Epidural catheter site, length of catheter in epidural space, distance from skin to epidural space and initial dose of local anaesthetic +/- opioid are currently recorded on the anaesthetic record and this should continue.

The monitoring and administration record of continuous infusion is designed for incorporation into a MEWS/PEWS observation chart as a template of what should be recorded for monitoring in addition to standard observations.