

NHS 111 Emergency Prescriptions



RECORD

- The Community Patient Safety Group (CPPSG) discussed an incident dating from 2021, following a coroner's request for information that later escalated into a full inquest
- In June 2021 the patient requested an emergency prescription for the epilepsy medicine Fycompa from their GP but could not receive one. They subsequently phoned NHS 111, who informed the patient an emergency prescription had been arranged to be collected from the pharmacy
- Upon arrival, the working locum pharmacist reported no record of a prescription, or any contact from 111. After 3 subsequent hours calling 111 with the family present asking for clarification with no resolution, the family left. The patient travelled to his partner's house and retrieved some older medication they had there - these tablets were the incorrect strength and out of date.
- Sadly, the patient passed away the following day from a seizure. Toxicology reports show the levels of medication in the bloodstream were not adequate

LEARN

- CPCS system (Sonar) review located there were 2 referrals sent on the day in question for this patient. They were marked as incomplete three days later, with the cited reason 'did not attend'.
- NHS 111 – while the referral was made, the patient's call was not triaged correctly, with the operator not understanding the severity of missing doses, the patient not receiving a call back and the patient not told the consequences of missing their medication
- Pharmacist – did not seek to see if it was an NHS111 referral, and never logged into the system
- Pharmacy – review needed on locum procedures, to ensure they have full understanding of referral systems and practice infrastructure
- Incidentally, it was noted that Fycompa, as a rarer prescription, was not something regularly stocked at the pharmacy in question. The CPCS would have been unable to be actioned, and the patient would need to have been supported in accessing their medication elsewhere

SHARE

- Details were shared with MSOs at the CPPSG meeting for consideration across the wider pharmacy profession.

ACT

- Prevention of future deaths notification issued to NHS 111
- Pharmacy:
 - Reviewed the SOP, making it clearer who to escalate to if unable to access the system, and emphasising how often the referral system should be checked
 - Implemented a poster in all pharmacies with details on how to access the system, and a requirement for all pharmacies to display user details in the CD cabinet
 - Reviewed locum policies, including:
 - More detailed locum handover documentation – with specifics linked to CPCS and how to access referrals
 - Asked for all locums taking shifts to upload evidence of training
 - Began use of an alert USB device that flashes to notify when a referral has been received

REVIEW

- Check in audit to ensure poster is on display and fully completed
- Now mandatory for locums to update and upload their certificates/declarations of competency onto locum booking platform – checked by locum team