

26th July 2013

To all Local Medical Committees (LMCs) and Local Pharmaceutical Committees (LPCs) in England

Dear colleague

Multi-compartment Compliance Aids (MCA) (also known as Monitored Dosage Systems)

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society, the professional body for pharmacists and pharmacy, has today published a report: *Improving patient outcomes: The better use of multi-compartment compliance aids* which includes guidance and recommendations for health and social care professionals. The report can be downloaded from www.rpharms.com.

Most GPs and community pharmacists have experienced demands for multi-compartment compliance aids from patients, their relatives and social care workers, to assist patients to use their medicines correctly. Following such demands there has often been little reflection as to whether that intervention improves patient outcomes – and the MCAs have been supplied almost on-demand.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society has considered the evidence base, which indicates that MCAs are not a panacea for medicines use, and that they should not automatically be the intervention of choice for all patients. Not all medicines are suitable for inclusion in MCAs and health and social care professionals should recognise that re-packaging medication from the manufacturer's original packaging may often be unlicensed and involves risks and responsibility for the decisions made.

With the lack of evidence of benefit to patient outcomes, it is a recommendation of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society that the use of original packs of medicines, supported by appropriate pharmaceutical care, should be the preferred option for the supply of medicines in the absence of a specific need for an MCA as an adherence intervention.

The improvement of patient outcomes will require substantial change in behaviours, with understanding and teamwork needed across primary and social care.

The General Practitioners Committee and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee, encourage LMCs and LPCs to collaborate on highlighting the publication of this guidance document to local:

- GPs;
- community pharmacists;
- hospital pharmacists and other hospital professionals who may be involved in recommending the use of MCAs
- CCG clinical leaders; and
- social care professionals and commissioners.

In order to promote an integrated approach across health and social care, so that patients receive the best possible support to use their medicines, we also recommend that LMCs and LPCs facilitate local discussions by the individuals listed above on the implications of the guidance to local working practices.

Yours sincerely

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