

Quality in practice: Cold Chain

It is important that all medicines are stored appropriately.

Thermolabile medicines such as vaccines and insulin should be maintained in the cold chain, which means their storage must be maintained at a temperature between 2C and 8C.

HOW TO DO SELF AUDIT

Remember - this is a confidential exercise. The results are for your use only (but be honest!).

- ◆ Some of the criteria may not be applicable to your practice. Feel free to change or add new criteria.
- ◆ Discuss results with others e.g. colleagues or facilitators, at your discretion.
- ◆ **You don't** have to complete the self-audit in one attempt. Do a little at a time.
- ◆ **You don't** have to make all the changes at once and in a short time.
- ◆ Be realistic in what you set out to achieve.
- ◆ **You do** have to identify areas where improvements are needed.
- ◆ **You do** have to review your action to be taken/target dates to assess your progress.
- ◆ **You do** have to monitor your progress.

Pharmacy Services

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Criteria	Audit Result			Comments/action to be taken	Target date	Completed
	Yes	No	n/a			
Equipment and Facilities						
All relevant staff are trained in cold change management						
Fridge is a pharmaceutical fridge (domestic fridges are not suitable for storage of medicines)						
The fridge is situated away from direct heat source						
Fridge plug is protected e.g. encased to prevent tampering, security marked "Do Not Switch Off" or is hardwired ('spurred')						
Fridge is maintained regularly and cleaned and defrosted according to the manufacturer's instructions						
The integrity of the fridge door seals is checked regularly						
Only pharmaceutical items are stored in the fridge e.g. no food, drink or medical samples						
Thermometer is able to give Max/Min/Current readings						
The fridge is kept locked or is sited in a locked room or secured area e.g. dispensary						
Storage and Stock Control						
Medicines are stored in the body of the fridge not in the fridge door						
Items are stored away from the back and sides of the fridge and the freezer compartment if it has one						
No more than 66% of the internal volume of the fridge is filled						
Expiry dates are checked regularly at least three monthly and records are kept of this activity						
Expired/spoiled fridge items are disposed of appropriately						
Stock rotation is carried out to ensure shortest expiry dates are used first						
Cold chain deliveries are refrigerated immediately on receipt						

Pharmacy Services

Criteria	Audit Result			Comments/action to be taken	Target date	Completed
	Yes	No	n/a			
Temperature Monitoring						
Procedures in place for at least daily recording of temperatures, ideally twice daily						
Recording form or equivalent is used and records kept at least two years						
Minimum, Maximum and Actual temperature is checked and recorded						
Reset button is used for every documented measurement						
Temperature records are reviewed monthly to assess any temperature drift						
Procedures in place for action to be taken in the event of abnormal temperatures						
Contingency Arrangements						
Procedures in place for suitable monitored alternative storage to maintain cold chain when required						

If you have any questions or comments about this audit please contact PharmacyPublicHealth@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

Pharmacy Services

Resources

NHSGG&C Vaccine Cold Storage:

<http://www.staffnet.ggc.scot.nhs.uk/Info%20Centre/PoliciesProcedures/GGClinicalGuidelines/GGC%20Clinical%20Guidelines%20Electronic%20Resource%20Direct/Vaccine%20Ordering%20Storage%20and%20Handling%20Guideline.pdf>

Immunisation Against Infectious Disease, 'The Green

Book'. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/storage-distribution-and-disposal-of-vaccines-the-green-book-chapter-3>

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1	August 2011	NHSGG&C Community Pharmacy Clinical Governance Facilitators Community Pharmacy Development Team
2	June 2013	NHSGG&C Community Pharmacy Clinical Governance Facilitators Community Pharmacy Development Team
3	April 2016	NHSGG&C Community Pharmacy Clinical Governance Facilitators Community Pharmacy Development Team
4	April 2018	NHSGG&C Community Pharmacy Clinical Governance Facilitators Community Pharmacy Development Team
5	August 2022	Adopted and reviewed by NHSGGC Pharmacy Public Health team