

ACTION REQUIRED – Recording Clozapine and Other Hospital-Issued Medicines on GP Systems as Hospital only medications

Dear Colleagues,

Please ensure that **hospital-issued or specialist-prescribed medications**, particularly **red-listed medicines such as Clozapine**, are recorded on GP clinical systems (EMIS/SystmOne) as **“hospital-only” medications**, not as repeats.

Accurate recording:

- Prevents inappropriate prescribing.
- Ensures full medication visibility across care settings.
- Supports patient safety, particularly in emergencies.
- Ensures medication appears in the **National Care Record**.

⚠ Serious Incident – Clozapine Toxicity Following Smoking Cessation

A recent incident has highlighted the potentially fatal consequences of incomplete or inaccurate medication records:

A patient prescribed **Clozapine by a mental health specialist** presented **multiple times** to the Emergency Department with **flu-like symptoms and constipation**, which were not recognised as signs of clozapine toxicity. The GP record did not reflect the clozapine prescription, and clinicians were unaware the patient was on this high-risk medication.

It was later discovered that the patient had recently **stopped smoking**—a critical factor, as tobacco smoke induces the liver enzyme CYP1A2, which affects clozapine metabolism. Smoking cessation can lead to a **50–70% increase** in clozapine plasma levels within a few days, significantly increasing the risk of toxicity. The interaction between smoking and clozapine is unrelated to nicotine.

Therefore, it is important to consider that clozapine levels will be affected where a change from normal cigarettes to electronic cigarettes or nicotine replacement therapy.

Tragically, the patient died, with **clozapine toxicity** cited as a likely contributing factor.

❓ Why this matters

Although prescribed by specialists, **all healthcare professionals** involved in a patient’s care need visibility of **hospital-only medications** like Clozapine to:

- Spot potential drug interactions.
- Recognise symptoms of toxicity.
- Refer promptly for dose adjustment when necessary (e.g. smoking status changes, infections).

Signs of Clozapine toxicity include: Flu-like symptoms, Seizures, Sedation, Constipation, Hypersalivation, Tachycardia, Fever

✓ Action Required by GP Practices

To reduce the risk of harm:

- Record **hospital/specialist medicines** as **“hospital-only”** (not as repeats).
- Enter a **minimal quantity** (e.g. 0.001 or 0).
- Mark dose/direction: **"Hospital issue only"**.
- Set **number of authorised issues to zero**.

This ensures the medicine appears in the **medication summary and National Care Record**, helping other professionals make safe and informed decisions.

📎 Support Resources

- **EMIS Guide:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XbkHJz2SdjA>
- **SystmOne Guide:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uO4epprsws0>
(Detailed screenshots attached separately for staff reference.)

🔗 Learn more:

- [Clozapine and Smoking – NHS Right Decisions](#)
- [Signs of Clozapine Toxicity – Dr Oracle](#)

Please cascade this message to all clinical staff involved in medicines management and patient care.
Thank you for your attention and continued support in ensuring medication safety.