

Service Specification

Safe Collection and Disposal of Unwanted Medicines and Sharps

1.0 Service Description

- 1.1 Acceptance, by community pharmacies, of unwanted medicines and sharps from households and individuals which require safe disposal. HSCB will need to have in place suitable arrangements for the collection and disposal of waste medicines and sharps from pharmacies.

2.0 Aims and intended service outcomes

- 2.1 To ensure the public has an easy method of safely disposing of unwanted medicines and sharps.
- 2.2 To reduce the volume of stored unwanted medicines in people's homes, by providing a route for disposal, thus reducing the risk of accidental poisonings in the home and diversion of medicines to other people not authorised to possess them.
- 2.3 To reduce the risk of exposing the public to unwanted medicines and sharps which have been disposed of by non-secure methods.
- 2.4 To reduce the environmental damage caused by the use of inappropriate disposal methods for unwanted medicines.

3.0 Service outline

3.1 Community pharmacy responsibilities where the HSCB has in place suitable arrangements for the collection and disposal of medicines and sharps from pharmacies:

- 3.1.1 Community pharmacies act as a collection point for the public's unwanted medicines and sharps. Returned medicines can be accepted from households and individuals. In this instance the term household is taken to include residential homes. However medicines cannot be accepted from nursing homes, who must themselves arrange for their waste medicines to be disposed of appropriately.
- 3.1.2 Returned medication will be stored in UN type containers provided by the waste disposal contractor.
- 3.1.3 Returned medicines (including controlled drugs) must be stored separately from dispensary stock and in accordance with existing guidance.

- 3.1.4 Community pharmacies will comply with all relevant waste management Legislation.
- 3.1.5 Pharmacy contractors should ensure that their staff are made aware of the risk associated with the handling of waste medicines and the correct procedures used to minimise those risks.
- 3.1.6 Appropriate protective equipment, including gloves, overalls and materials to deal with spillage, should be readily available close to the storage site.

3.2 HSCB responsibilities:

- 3.2.1 Pharmacies will only have to act as a collection point for disposal of unwanted medicines and sharps if the HSCB has in place suitable arrangements for collection and disposal.
- 3.2.2 To use an appropriately registered specialist contractor to remove waste from pharmacies and convey it to a licensed site for safe disposal.
- 3.2.3 Collections from pharmacies should be on a regular basis, at a frequency agreed by the HSCB and the pharmacy contractor. There should also be the ability for the pharmacy to request extra collections if required.
- 3.2.4 The HSCB will provide a contact for any queries relating to disposal of returned medicines.

13 January 2014