

**Chief Pharmacist**  
Duncan Macmillan House  
Porchester Road  
Nottingham  
NG3 6AA  
0115 969 1300

# Memo

**From:** Chief Pharmacist  
**To:** All General Managers  
**cc:** Pharmacy Leadership Team  
**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019  
**Re:** Expired and Unwanted Medicines

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During the recent inspection, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) identified that some inpatient wards and community teams had expired medicines in their clinic rooms. This could happen anywhere in the Trust that medicines are used.

In some cases these were appropriately segregated and simply awaiting return to pharmacy or destruction by clinical staff. In some cases it became clear that these were kept deliberately and used as training tools for new staff.

Our advice is that all clinical areas regularly check storage areas for the presence of any expired, obsolete or otherwise unwanted medicines. If any are found, arrangements should be made to return these or dispose of these according to the local procedure for this in a timely manner.

If done regularly this will reduce the likelihood of a patient inadvertently receiving an expired medicine which may be of suboptimal quality. It will also prevent further issues with the CQC and free up space in medicines storage cupboards and trolleys. Overcrowding in medicines storage cupboards and trolleys can be a contributing factor to medication errors.

Where it is clear that training is needed to support staff to be competent and confident to handle and administer a particular medicine please contact the Medicines Safety Team who will collate requests for the Trust Pharmacy Service to consider further.

If you have a query about a medicine, please contact the Medicines Information service or ask a pharmacist or member of the pharmacy team for assistance.
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