

THE QUALITY & SAFETY CHALLENGE 2012

- ▶ WHAT IS SAFER_x?
- ▶ WHY ENTER THE CHALLENGE?
- ▶ THE HQSC ENABLERS
- ▶ PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

What is SafeRx?

SafeRx[®] aims to increase awareness about how medicines can be used safely and effectively, particularly high risk medicines. Bulletins and patient guides are written by the Quality Use of Medicines team pharmacists, peer reviewed and distributed

to primary care teams (GPs, practice nurses, practice managers, pharmacists and midwives) that have signed up. Resources are on www.saferx.co.nz, and linked from GP Practice Management System (PMS) software.

Why Enter the Challenge?

SafeRx[®] has been evaluated by the Auckland School of Pharmacy. Most SafeRx[®] members felt it was applicable to their daily practice, the bulletins were unique and provided 'to-the-point' safety messages, and SafeRx[®] had the potential to improve the safe use of medicines in New Zealand.

SafeRx[®] was initially available for Waitemata DHB teams only. After receiving first prize at the Waitemata Health Excellence Award, the First Do No Harm Group suggested SafeRx[®] should be made available to all primary care teams in the Northern Region.

The HQSC Enablers

The Health and Quality Challenge 2012 enabled health professionals from all four Northern Region DHBs to be invited into SafeRx[®]:

- All seven PHOs were contacted; meetings were held with five of them thus securing a good working relationship
- Every GP and most practice nurses were personally invited to join SafeRx[®]
- Every pharmacy in the Northern region was invited to join SafeRx[®]
- Wider distribution was facilitated via

Boltmail, a database management system

- Two PMS providers (MedTech and My Practice) now link to SafeRx[®]
- The www.saferx.co.nz site was upgraded, including direct 'sign-up' from the site
- The New Zealand Formulary now links to SafeRx[®]
- The SafeRx[®] database has doubled to 900 members
- Website visits have tripled to 340 unique visits per month

Plans for the Future

The format works, the high opt-in rate demonstrates interest and demand.

The non-invasive, all inclusive approach, with strong branding, and a focus on

quality has made SafeRx[®] work.

The database infrastructure is in place to roll out nationally.

www.saferx.co.nz

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Health Quality and Safety Commission, the First Do No Harm Group of the Northern Region Health Plan and the Waitemata DHB Quality Use of Medicines Steering Group.

For more information contact Angela Lambie or John Kristiansen via feedback@saferx.co.nz

SAFER_x
SAFER USE OF HIGH RISK MEDICINES

Waitemata District Health Board
Te Wai Awhina

COLCHICINE - SAFE PRESCRIBING - TOE THE LINE!!

- ▶ DANGEROUS WHEN NOT USED CORRECTLY
- ▶ AVOID PRESCRIBING AS A FIRST-LINE TREATMENT
- ▶ ALWAYS FOLLOW NEW, SAFER DOSING RECOMMENDATIONS
- ▶ ENSURE PATIENTS UNDERSTAND THE RISKS
- ▶ KNOW THAT EVEN A COUPLE OF TABLETS MAY BE FATAL FOR CHILDREN
- ▶ PRESCRIBE SMALLER QUANTITIES

COLCHICINE CAN CAUSE SIGNIFICANT TOXICITY
Colchicine is considered to be a 'high-risk' medicine as it has the potential to cause significant harm when not used correctly'. A case series of nine Auckland patients who each presented with a significant colchicine overdose showed that the majority of overdoses were accidental, and all but one resulted in death'.
Fatal poisonings have been reported in patients who have taken as little as 7mg, although some patients have taken up to 40mg and survived'. Symptoms of acute colchicine toxicity usually appear 2 to 12 hours after ingestion), and

These include older people, those with hepatic impairment, renal dysfunction, and people who weigh less than 50kg. Other treatments should be considered for these individuals, or lower doses of colchicine used. Colchicine is contra-indicated in severe renal or hepatic disease'.
Children are very vulnerable to colchicine poisoning in the home. **Doses as small as one or two tablets can cause serious toxicity and even death**'. Colchicine should always be stored well out of reach of children (and grandchildren)'.
AVOID PRESCRIBING COLCHICINE AS A FIRST-LINE TREATMENT

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Welcome to SafeRx
This site contains links to numerous materials designed for health professionals working in primary care, including doctors, pharmacists, nurses and midwives.
SafeRx resources promote the safe and effective use of medicines, especially high-risk medicines.
We publish new resources every two months. Please sign up if you would like to receive them by email.

Latest Bulletins

Information for patients
We have developed patient guides for a selection of 'safer' medicines. These guides are designed to inform you about your medicines. Your health professional may also use them when discussing your medicines with you.

Sign up
Sign up here if you would like to receive the latest SafeRx resources every five months by email. You can unsubscribe or change your details anytime. Your privacy is important to us; your personal information will not be disclosed to any other parties.

Brief updates
Methamphetamine
The Health Quality and Safety Commission (HQSC) have recently used our guidelines for the safe use of methamphetamine for Primary Care.

Feedback
We value your feedback, especially any ideas/suggestions for new bulletins. Please contact us through our online contact form or email us.

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THINGS YOU CAN DO TO TAKE TRAMADOL SAFELY

- ▶ Let your doctor know if you have **ever** experienced a seizure (or fit)
 - Tramadol can cause seizures, especially in people who have had them before
 - Some other medicines can also cause seizures when taken with tramadol
 - Seizures are more likely to happen with high doses