



### Welcome to the Newsletter's Summer / Autumn Edition...

We welcome the latest addition of our newsletter following a year without this. This has been a busy time for the service and many changes have taken place.

We said goodbye to our health care support worker Raye Currie who retired at the start of this year and have welcomed our new member of the team mental health nurse Gordon Russell.

We have also had nursing students join and leave our team and we thank the support you have provided them with.



### What you should know about wounds



wounds which can become infected.

The risk of infected wounds increases with muscle popping as the drug is absorbed much slower and this is a warm and moist area for bacteria to grow. Long term groin injecting can cause venous disease and ulcers.

An unclean preparation area for drugs, poor injecting technique, reusing or sharing equipment and allowing others to inject for you can all cause infection.

When drugs are manufactured this can often be in environments where there is little consideration for cleanliness of both the people and the area of drug preparation. During this process drugs may be mixed with other substances which can increase risk of infection. The country of origin is also a risk when considering risk of infection as well as how the drugs are being transported e.g. body cavities, temperature at which drugs are exposed too.

There is also a risk of drugs being contaminated on purpose by manufacturers e.g. anthrax. Not seeking help early enough, leaving an infected wound could lead to you becoming seriously unwell.

Circumstances that may help reduce infection include good personal hygiene such as washing hands before using equipment,

always using a filter and new injecting equipment. It is also important to clean injecting sites and any infected areas should be washed with tap water – do not rub and do not use soap as this will dry the skin. You should consider the area in which you are preparing your drugs and try to keep this area clean to avoid contamination of drugs or equipment.

Ensuring good injecting technique and not allowing others to inject you will also reduce some risk. To reduce harm or risk it would be advised to use foil and smoke drugs rather than inject and if there are any signs of infection you should change your site as injecting into an infected area will increase risk of an infected wound.

**If you have an infection please contact your G.P or NHS24 on 111**



Staff have attended a training day on wound management following the increase of severe infections reported through the service. Health consequences of bacterial infections are relatively common across different infections. Most can be cured if treated early enough. If you suspect you may have an infection we would advise you see your GP and in extreme circumstances attend A & E. Signs and Symptoms of bacterial infection:

#### **HEAT- PAIN- REDNESS-SWELLING**

Circumstances that may cause an infection include a compromised immune or vascular system e.g. blood born virus or varicose veins.

Reduced mobility and poor general health including diet can also add to circumstances causing

## Medication Information - "What is Topiramate?"

Evidence has found topiramate to be effective in reducing cravings for alcohol and symptoms of anxiety and depression in the early phase of alcohol withdrawal. The evidence suggests that Topiramate can reduce the amount of heavy drinking days and increase abstinence. Topiramate is not currently approved for the treatment of alcohol dependence and is prescribed off licence.



### NALOXONE TRAINING IS AVAILABLE



This does not take long and could save a life. Please ask about this if you are interested, it is likely your named nurse will offer this regularly. There is now a new resuscitation doll "Light up Lou" which is very helpful for demonstrating accurate CPR.



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### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Requests to make any changes to your prescription need to be discussed at least 48 working hours before you hope this can happen. We will support you to achieve changes as best as we can.

If you miss a review appointment and do not make contact, at your next appointment your prescription will be on hold at your chemist.

Our duty/on-call system operates from 09.30am until 3.45pm Mon – Fri. We have a leaflet about our medicines which is available to everyone and will be given to those new to service.

We have two clinics; The Recovery Clinic and Alcohol Review Clinic. These are to monitor medications and offer support in recovery when a named nurse is no longer required.

New referrals living in Dumfries, Annandale and Eskdale - Assessment Clinics offer a choice of days and times to attend.

Want to share information, offer your views and be involved in the running of the service? Attend the Service User Involvement Group which runs at Addaction on Buccleuch Street Dumfries on Tuesday's, fortnightly, from 10.30 – contact to check dates.

Midpark Hospital now offer Diazepam instead of Chlordiazepoxide to manage withdrawals for inpatient alcohol detox's.

Thank you for reading this episode of the Newsletter.

For the next edition, we welcome your ideas and requested areas of interest. Please contact us by phone **01387 244555** , email [intheknow@nhs.net](mailto:intheknow@nhs.net) or by **Facebook.**