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The role of the Medicines Optimisation Care Setting Team:

- Promote cost-effective prescribing and safe use of medicines in order to prevent errors/incidents and harms related to medicines across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin (STW).
- Provide medicines management related information, advice, guidance & resources to support good quality, person centred, safe medicines management.
- Enable care setting colleagues, through programmes of training and support, to manage medicines with confidence.

Pharmacy Easter Opening Times



As we approach the Easter bank holiday period, we would like to remind all our colleagues in care settings to plan ahead for medicines

management to ensure continuity of care for the people you support. Pharmacy opening hours will be reduced over the Easter weekend, which may impact access to both routine and urgent medication supplies. We strongly encourage services to review medication stocks in advance, order repeat prescriptions in good time, and check that there are adequate supplies of essential and time-critical medicines as well as any homely remedies and other over the counter products where appropriate. Please also ensure you are aware of the [Think Which Service](#) message and arrangements for urgent medication access and out-of-hours support. Details of pharmacy opening times across our area can be found [here](#). Please make sure this information is shared with relevant staff and incorporated into your service planning to minimise any disruption to patient care.

Sterile Dressing Packs: Positive Progress, More to Do

The [Statement regarding prescribing of sterile dressing packs in Primary Care](#) was written in collaboration with both the Tissue Viability & Wound Healing Service and the Infection, Prevention and Control Team.

Good progress is being made following the statement being shared in April 2025.

Dressing pack prescribing has reduced from **5,569 packs (£41,626)** in Jan–Dec 2024 to **5,065 packs (£39,173)** since the guidance was issued.

While this shows a positive shift, sterile dressing packs should generally not be prescribed on FP10. Stockpiling and not using all the items contained within the pack can contribute to an increase in avoidable medicines waste. Clinicians in any setting including care settings, community settings and primary care teams are advised to make an appropriate assessment of the individual and the surrounding environment to ascertain whether an aseptic technique using a sterile dressing pack is required or if a non-touch technique in a clean environment is sufficient.

Further information to support considerations for which technique (clean or sterile) is best practice depending on the environment can be found within the statement, along with details of how all settings can procure sterile dressings packs.

NEW From Opus: Monthly Medicines Newsletter

[OPUS Pharmacy Services](#), who specialise in medicines training, launched their first [monthly medicines newsletter](#) in February. You can sign up to receive regular newsletters by visiting their website. They have also recently updated their Buccal Midazolam & Epilepsy Medicines [online course](#) to reflect new guidance.

Medicines Waste Campaign 2026/27: Optimising Long-Acting Insulin Quantities

Following the success of the Year 1 "[Think Twice, Order Right](#)" campaign, Year 2 focuses on optimising prescribing quantities of long-acting insulin pens. This supports ICB priorities around value-based prescribing, patient safety, sustainability, and reducing variation in practice.

Long-acting insulin is a high-cost medicine and doses often change. When full packs (usually five pens) are issued without reviewing current need, unused insulin can build up in patients' homes and care settings.



Routine supply of full packs without review can lead to medicines waste, unnecessary NHS costs, and risks such as expired or incorrectly stored insulin. Reducing oversupply also lowers environmental impact from disposal and packaging.

As part of this work, you may notice more insulin quantity reviews being carried out by GP practices to ensure prescribing matches each patient's current needs.

Important update regarding the Medicines Optimisation Care Settings Team

Due to the recent [government reset](#) and subsequent organisational changes, our team will regrettably be stepping down from our roles. This has been a difficult development, particularly given the close working relationships we have all built together and the shared commitment to supporting high-quality medicines management in care settings across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin.

While this direct support will no longer be in place, we want to ensure you feel equipped to continue accessing reliable guidance and maintaining best practice. For ongoing support, we recommend accessing national guidance and resources such as NICE guidelines, CQC assessment frameworks, NHS England medicines optimisation resources, and engaging with local and regional professional networks for example Partners in Care. We will be leaving our roles on 23rd April 2026 and our generic email box (stw.carehomeenquiries@nhs.net) will cease to exist from 20th April.

We recognise the challenges this change may bring and want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for your collaboration, dedication and commitment to safe and effective medicines management. It has been a privilege to work alongside you.

Collectively, we bring many years of experience working across care settings, and it has been a privilege to apply that shared knowledge and expertise in supporting you. We have learned from you just as much as we hope you have learned from us and we are proud of the relationships we have built and the progress we have achieved together in strengthening safe and effective medicines management. We would also like to take a moment to recognise how incredibly engaged, proactive, and collaborative you have all been in working with us. Your openness to learning, commitment to improving medicines safety, and willingness to adopt best practice have made a real and lasting difference across care settings in STW. It has been a privilege to support such dedicated teams. We wish you all the very best moving forward and are confident in your continued commitment to delivering high-quality care.

Useful Resources

For support, guidance, and practical tools, we encourage you to visit our ICB Medicines Management website. The [Clinical Guidelines, Policies and Resources page](#) offers a wide range of useful resources specifically designed for care settings, including up-to-

date guidance and best practice information to support safe and effective medicines management.



Celebrating Success in Medicines Management Training (2024–2026)

We are delighted to share a positive update on the continued success of our medicines management training programme across care settings.

Since 2024, we have had the privilege of supporting and working alongside over 700 members of the care workforce. Your enthusiasm, commitment, and engagement have been truly inspiring, and we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has attended and contributed to these sessions.

Our training programme has been carefully designed to support, empower, and upskill staff, helping to strengthen confidence and promote safe, effective medicines management in everyday practice. It's been fantastic to see such strong participation and dedication to continuous learning.

Over this period, we have delivered a range of training sessions, including:

- ✓ Self-care medicines
- ✓ Medicines Management in Care
- ✓ Error Workshops
- ✓ Care Home Medicines Ordering Cycle
- ✓ Personalised Medication

Each session plays an important role in enhancing knowledge, improving safety, and ultimately supporting better outcomes for the people in your care.

Coffee-break Quote



Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter; we hope to see you soon...

Ceri & Amy