

Self-administration of medicines

Information for patients

This leaflet has been provided to help answer some of the questions you may have about self-administration of medicines during your stay in hospital.

What is self-administration?

The self-administration program enables you to be responsible for taking your own medications during your inpatient stay. This will give you an opportunity to improve your understanding about the medicines you have been prescribed. It will allow you to be independent during your stay in hospital and help to prepare you for when you go home.

Using your own medication in hospital means you continue to take medicines familiar to you. It will also decrease the number of medicines that are wasted in hospital.

Please note that taking part in the scheme is not compulsory and it will not affect your care if you do not wish to do so.

Throughout your hospital stay, your nurse, doctor and pharmacist will be able to answer any questions and solve any problems you may have with your medicines.

What happens while I am in hospital?

Your nurse will explain to you how the self-administration scheme works. You can then decide whether you wish to be responsible for the storage and administration of your medicines, or whether you would prefer your nurse to do this. If you decide to take part but change your mind later, please tell your nurse.

If you decide to be responsible for your own medicines, the nurse will:

- explain the scheme to you in more detail
- check that the medicines you have are still what the doctor wants you to take and that the labels give the correct instructions
- supply you with any newly started medications
- dispose of any of your regular medicines that are not needed, or are not of good quality (with your agreement)
- explain which medicines you will be self-administering, the reasons for taking them and the possible side effects
- ask you to sign a form to say that you understand the scheme and wish to self-administer your medicines
- give you a key to the locked cupboard or drawer by your bedside where you must keep your medicines

What will my responsibility be?

You will need to make sure that all of your medicines are stored safely in the designated cupboard or drawer and that it is kept locked at all times. You should keep the key safe and secure. Please give the key to your nurse if you need to leave the ward for any reason.

Please tell the nurse if you are going to run out of any medicines.

You are free to change your mind at any time about self-administration.

What if I have medications that require special storage, for example, refrigeration?

Please inform your nurse if you have brought in any medications that require special storage. Your nurse will make sure these items are identifiable as your belongings and store them safely and appropriately. If you have in-use insulin with you, this does not require refrigeration and can be stored securely in your bedside locker.

What do I do if I think I have taken the wrong tablets or had too many of them?

You must inform your nurse or doctor immediately.

What happens when I go home?

The pharmacist and nurses will provide additional medication counselling before your discharge and will answer any questions you have about your medications. You will take all of your medications home with you. If you do not have enough medicines left, we will give you at least a two weeks' supply. You will also be given a discharge letter, which will contain a list of your medications.

Please remember to hand back your keys

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any questions you may have. If you have any suggestions or comments about your stay, please either speak to the ward staff or fill in a comment card

Sharing your information

We have teamed up with Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals in a partnership known as King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas'. To make sure everyone you meet always has the most up-to-date information about your health, we may share information about you between the hospitals.

Care provided by students

We provide clinical training where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS

Tel: 020 3299 3601

Email: kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net

PALS at Princess Royal University Hospital, Farnborough Common, Orpington, Kent BR6 8ND

Tel: 01689 863252

Email: kch-tr.palspruh@nhs.net

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Communications and Interpreting telephone line on 020 3299 4826 or email kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net