

## Safe Administration of Medicines

### Use of a second staff member 'runners' to deliver medication to the patient

#### Background

Policy and guidance to support the safe administration of medicines is contained in the following document [Safe & Secure Handling of Medicines Policy](#). In a few wards a practice has developed where the registered nurse undertaking medicines administration uses a colleague to take the medicine they have prepared to the intended patient (this is sometimes referred to as using a 'runner'). This practice is not authorised by the SSHM Policy and should be avoided and actively discouraged. In Mental Health Services there have been numerous medication incidents where medicines have been given to the wrong patient by nurses following this practice.

#### Position statement

**The use of a colleague or 'runner' to take medicine to a patient on behalf of the registered nurse undertaking the medicines administration round is not permitted in GGC Mental Health Services.**

Following a review of the risk of error and the number of reported errors associated with this unauthorised practice the Mental Health Safer Use of Medicines group in conjunction with the Chief Nurse and Professional Nurse Leads has concluded this practice must cease. Any area accustomed to using this approach must stop this unauthorised practice; undertake a risk assessment and implement alternative authorised practice with immediate effect. Wards are advised to contact local practice development nurses for advice on safer alternatives.

Good practice is considered to be

**In circumstances where patients are unable to come to a treatment room or to the trolley for medication, the registered nurse undertaking the medicines round should prepare the patient's medicines, lock the trolley/treatment room and take the medicines in person to the patient for administration OR take the trolley to the patient and then administer the medicines directly to them.**

MH SUM group

Chief Nurse and Professional Nurse Leads

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