Care Homes Project
Reducing Medicines Waste, Harm and Variation

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Aim
There is a high level of medicines waste in care homes. The aim of this project was to streamline medicines ordering procedures to reduce medicines waste, harm from medicines and variation in ordering processes within care homes across Fife by:
- Reviewing medicines ordering systems in care homes and implementing streamlined processes to minimise medicines waste.
- Maximising cost-effective prescribing.
- Improving adherence to the Fife medicines formulary.

Methodology
- Senior Pharmacy Technicians carried out medication order reviews in care homes across Fife.
- Training was given to care home and general practice staff.
- Regular follow-up visits to care homes were made to support and implement improvements to the ordering process.
- Comparisons were made to levels of medication returned from care homes to community pharmacies for destruction at the start of the review and 3 - 6 months later.
- The Technicians worked closely with care homes, General Practices and community pharmacies, improving communication and supporting seamless care.

Results
Reviews have been completed in 19 care homes to date:
- Streamlined medicines ordering procedures have been implemented.
- 715 interventions have been implemented which reduced waste or harm and improved formulary compliance.
- Positive feedback has been received from general practices, care homes and community pharmacies.
- Approximately £128,000 per annum in prescribing efficiencies has been delivered over a 12 month period.
- Three governance issues were identified by the new SLWG (Short Life Working Group) to improve medicines safety and ordering processes -
  - Move to 28 day prescribing cycles
  - Homely remedies guidance
  - Changes to medication communication forms

Conclusion
What do the results mean for the service and people?
- The project has demonstrated that with appropriate support and by streamlining the medicines ordering process within care homes, medicines waste, harm and variation can be greatly reduced.
- Planning to roll the project out to all care homes in Fife pending funding confirmation.

Facts and Figures

- Total Annual Cost Saving (£128,000)
- No. Of Interventions n=715

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