



An Audit Assessing the Appropriateness of Controlled Drug Destruction and its Relevant Documentation

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Introduction

An NHS sponsored study estimated wastage of **£300 million** per year of medications.

Our trust estimates it saves **£10,000** in returns of non control drugs (CD's) per 6 weeks, this number could be even greater if all CD's were appropriately returned rather than unnecessarily destroyed, this is what my audit assessed.

Aims + Objectives

Criteria to assess CD return compliance was made as follows.

1. Each CD drug intended for destruction must be recorded into the CD destruction register.
2. CD medication should be returned into stock (not destroyed) unless it meets ANY of the criteria listed below:

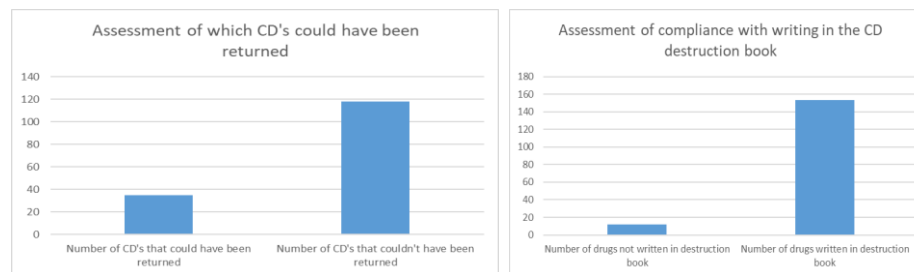
- Patient's own drugs
- Opened liquids
- ≤6 months expiry
- In poor condition
- Issued >6 months ago
- Loose tablets
- Cut foil strips
- More medication than quoted on the container or box
- Part of a blister pack

Method

Data was collected over a 6-week period starting from the 18th December 2020. Records of all CD drug returns stored for destruction in pharmacy were assessed to see whether they had been written in the destruction register according to the Trust policy. They were also assessed to see if they were appropriate for destruction. The drug cost was analysed based on pricing listed on the trust dispensing software ascribe.



Results



The total cost of the CD's that could have been returned was £60.32, the doop kits used cost an additional £80.52 and 4 people helped with destruction over a 3-and-a-half-hour period. If all employees were band 5 this would be equivalent of £178.36 in wages. This would total at £319.20 for a 6-week process.

Conclusion

This study clearly showed the need for more education around the topic of waste management, in particular, assessment of whether a CD can be returned or should be destroyed.

Other suggestions for change included:

- Reviewing the policy
- Having a returns checklist on the CD cupboard
- Education e.g. PowerPoint or an activity

References

- 1) Trust standard operating procedure. *Procedure for return of medication to the pharmacy department.* May 2019.
- 2) Trust standard operating procedure. *Procedure for the disposal of unwanted controlled drugs.* May 2012.
- 3) Hazell B, Ross R. *Pharmaceutical waste reduction in the NHS* [Internet]. 2015 [cited 2021 March 16]. Available from: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/pharmaceutical-waste-reduction.pdf>

