

Help with taking medicines. Your questions answered.

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Information sheet B11

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Taking your medicine is always your responsibility. There are times when an appropriate level of support can be provided to assist you with your medication. This information sheet helps answer some of the questions you may have.

Can my care worker help me with taking my medicine?

If you need assistance with your medicine, and there is no one else who can help, your care worker may help you when they visit you, but only if the following have been done:

- Your Health Worker or Social Care Worker has said you need help
- You have signed a form saying you agree
- Your care worker has had proper training

What medicine can they help me with?

The medicine must have been prescribed in your name, and must be available in the packaging it was originally dispensed in and have the label giving the instructions from your GP or the pharmacist clearly visible.

If you are having difficulty taking any of your medicines then you should discuss with your pharmacist who may be able to make some changes to help. You could use a dosette box. This keeps your medicine in daily order so that you know you are taking the right amount at the right time. Not all medicines are suitable for dosette boxes, so check with the pharmacist before you buy a box.

Can a member of my family fill my dosette box for me?

The people who provide your care may decide that this could be alright for you. If they agree, you will be asked to sign a form saying that your family will now do this and that they take responsibility. Care workers employed by care agencies will **only accept** dosette boxes filled by the

pharmacist, but they can give you your medicines direct from the packet or bottle that has been prescribed by your GP.

Are there medical things that my care worker *cannot* help me with?

Your care worker is **not allowed** to put dressings on open wounds, and is **not allowed** to give injections, insert any medicines inside the body, or give you an enema.

My care worker calls on me in the morning and in the evening, but I need assistance with my medicine at midday as well.

Taking your medicine will always be your responsibility, so make sure your doctor knows if you have problems. Your care worker can help you with your medicines when they are making a visit to you. If you need help at other times you should tell your doctor or your nurse so that they can arrange the extra help you need, or you could ask your care worker to contact a Health Worker on your behalf.

Will my care worker help me with my ear or eye drops?

Your care worker may help you with ear/eye drops if they have been shown how to do this by the District Nurse or other health worker, *and* if you have no one else to help you, **but only** if the drops have to be put in during a regular visit.

Can my care worker help me to put on my anti-embolic stockings?

Your care worker may be willing to help you with this, **but only** if this is during one of their regular visits and only if they have had the correct training.

What will happen if I refuse to take my medicine?

You have the right to refuse to take any of the medicines that you have been given and anyone involved in helping you must respect this right. Your medicines will never be forced upon you, but if there are concerns for your health, the people involved in your care and general well-being will be told about your decision, for example your doctor or care manager.

Returning unused medicines to the pharmacist

Disposing of unused medicines will always be your responsibility. We recommend that they are returned to the pharmacy for safe disposal. If you have no one else who can do this for you please talk to your care worker as they may be able to arrange this for you.

Where can I get more information?

You can get a copy of the complete Medicines and Clinical Tasks Policy from your Care Provider, Social Care Worker or by phoning Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224.

Your opportunity to feedback

We welcome your comments about the services you receive. If you would like to tell us what you think, please either:

Contact us by going to our website, www.somerset.gov.uk, or

- Speak to your social care worker
- Phone Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224, or
- Contact the Adults and Health Customer Experience Officer
Floor B2 East
County Hall
Taunton
TA1 4DY
Email: customerexperience@somerset.gov.uk

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