

## Your emergency care summary

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# Medway Maritime Hospital uses Summary Care Records to improve patient safety

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Medway Maritime Hospital treats around 400,000 patients each year mainly in Medway and Swale, but increasingly in other parts of North and West Kent too. Every day the hospital has approximately 150 patients admitted for hospital care and treatment<sup>1</sup>.

The introduction of Summary Care Records (SCRs) at Medway NHS Foundation Trust has improved medicines reconciliation for patients admitted to wards.



**Medicines Reconciliation** is a process that occurs when a patient is admitted to hospital. Pharmacy staff check that all changes to a patient's existing medications are intentional and documented.

This process also highlights any unintentional changes so that these can be referred to a doctor or pharmacist for review, such as:

- Incorrect medication strengths
- Incorrect frequency of dosage, or
- Unintentional omission of medications a patient needs to continue taking.

<sup>1</sup><http://www.medway.nhs.uk/about-the-trust>



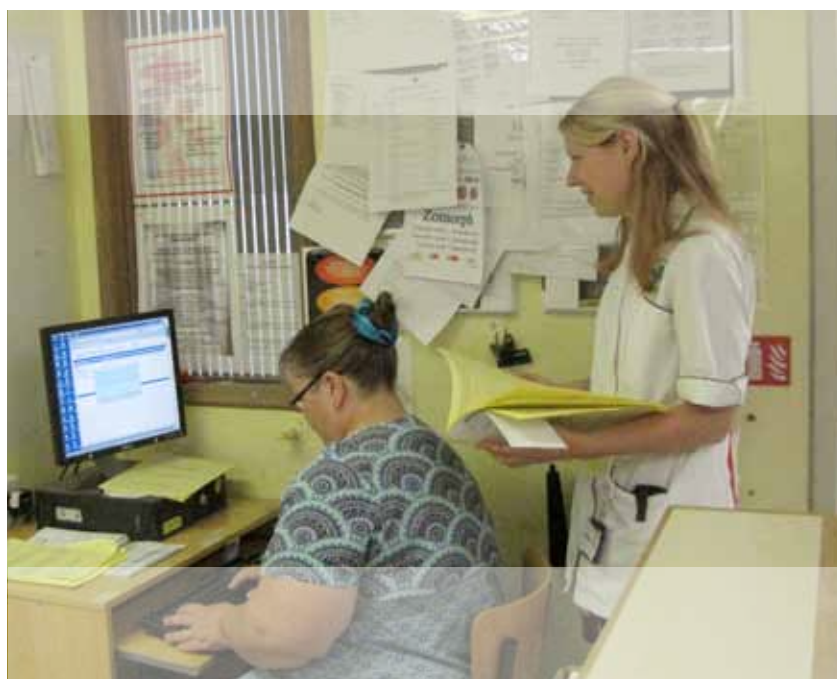
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Attempts to obtain information direct from GP practices are not always successful. In some cases this is due to GP practices being unable to provide patient information over the phone, or because the information is needed out-of-hours, at weekends or bank holidays, when the GP practice is closed.

“It’s important to ensure that the correct medication is identified for the patient as soon as possible after their admission,” explains Penny Hartman, Medicines Management Technician.

“A high percentage of patients admitted to these wards are unable to provide us with all the medical information we need to be able to reconcile their medication.

This has been a challenge for us so we were interested to see if having access to the SCR would be able to help us.



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### Medway Maritime Hospital Case Study

A patient was admitted onto the elderly care ward in a confused state, after a fall at home.

The patient had no information with them about their medicines as they had arrived at the hospital via ambulance and had not had time to collect their belongings and medication.

Doctors caring for the patient upon admission were unable to contact the patient's GP to check the medication history, and therefore asked the pharmacy team to complete a medication history for the patient.

After viewing the patient's SCR, the Pharmacy Technician identified that the patient was taking several medicines on a regular basis for anxiety, fluid retention, pain relief, anaemia and breathing problems.

The Pharmacy Technician provided a list of the patient's usual prescribed medication to the doctors, who were then able to review the list and prescribe each of the patient's medications for the duration of their stay.

If the SCR had not been available, it is likely that the medical team would have missed important parts of the patient's medical history, and the patient may have had doses of their medications omitted.

**In this particular case, failure to prescribe existing medications could have led to:**

- A withdrawal reaction in the patient as her body was used to the regular medication for anxiety and pain relief.
- Exacerbated fluid retention problems or caused heart failure.

**If the doctors had failed to recognise that the patient was also taking:**

- Medication which may affect kidney function and potassium levels, it could have led to a misinterpretation of blood test results, and possible inappropriate prescribing.
- Inhalers on a regular basis, it could have led to respiratory symptoms not being appropriately managed.
- Thiamine and Vitamin B compound strong, this could have meant that doctors were unaware of a history of chronic excessive alcohol use which would have been a consideration when managing the patient during this admission.

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#### To find out more about Summary Care Records:

Visit [www.nhscarerecords.nhs.uk](http://www.nhscarerecords.nhs.uk)

Contact your local Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) [www.pals.nhs.uk](http://www.pals.nhs.uk)

Call the Summary Care Record Information Line on 0300 123 3020

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