NHS Borders
Communications & Engagement

NHS Borders
Education Centre
Borders General Hospital
Melrose
Roxburghshire
TD6 9BD
01896 825545
foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk

Freedom of Information request 427-23

Request

I am therefore submitting this Freedom of Information Request (FoIR), aiming to understand how each NHS organisation uses and disposes of antimicrobials when given as an intravenous (IV) intermittent infusion. Your responses may be integrated into a working paper on antibiotic residues and pharmapollution. They may also be used to ask questions to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Care Quality Commission (CQC) regarding ongoing inspections of hospital practices and policies in relation to the threat posed by AMR.

Please provide an overall answer to the questions below factoring in practice in the following clinical areas of the hospital: Critical Care, Emergency Department/Wards, Medical Wards, Surgical Wards, Outpatients, etc.

Please exclude the following areas—where evidence shows that correct practice already takes place—from your response: Oncology, Haematology, Paediatrics, Neonatal Units. Please also exclude responses related to flushing of the needlefree extension or vascular access device as these questions specifically relate to the residual volume of antibiotic in the administration set line (infusion pump set and/or gravity set).

A template spreadsheet (in.xlsx format) is provided for you to fill out as a further attachment to the email containing this letter. Please use this template for ease of data processing.

FOI 427-23 Data Sheet.xlsx

Q1a. With regards to administration sets (pump and gravity) used to infuse IV antibiotics, does your institution have a policy to flush the administration set to give the full dose of antibiotics in accordance with the following guidelines?

• The Royal Marsden Manual of Clinical Nursing Procedures, Tenth Edition, Chapter 15, which states: “After completion of an intermittent infusion, an appropriate diluent solution should be administered via the administration set. This is to ensure the full dose of medication has been administered to the patient.”

• The “MEDUSA” injectable medicines guide instructions on how to administer intermittent infusions, which states: “Flush the administration set before it is disconnected with sufficient volume of sodium chloride (or compatible diluent) to ensure the total dose is given. Flush at the same rate the medicine was administered.”

• The National Infusion and Vascular Access Society (NIVAS) “Intravenous Administration of Medicines to adults: Guidance on ‘line flushing’ Version 3 2021”, which states: “‘At the end of the infusion, the medicine remaining in the infusion set should be flushed with sodium chloride 0.9% or other compatible diluent, using one of the methods described below.”

Q1b. If the answer to Q1a is “yes”, is your organisation fully compliant with your policy to flush the administration set to give the full dose of antibiotics in accordance with guidelines?

Q1c. If the answer to Q1a is “yes”, do you follow method 1 or 2 as outlined by the NIVAS guidelines linked above?

Q2a. With regards to administration sets (pump and gravity) used to infuse IV antibiotics, if you do have a policy in place to flush the administration set, have you audited compliance with this policy?

Q2b. If the answer to Q2a is “yes”, can you share the audit results? If so, please provide a copy as an attachment to your response to this FoIR.

Q3. What education measures have you put in place to ensure healthcare professionals in your organisation understand:

a. The existing guidance on flushing administration sets that are used for IV antibiotic infusions (as laid out in the sources above)?
b. The patient risks involved with failing to flush the residual volume of IV antibiotics in the administration sets?
c. The possible effects of not flushing the IV administration set containing IV antibiotics on antimicrobial resistance?

Q4. With regards to administration sets (pump and gravity) used to infuse IV antibiotics, which of the following (if any) are included in your policy with regards to disposing of the administration set and residual volume of either the prescribed antibiotic or flushing solution?

a. Complete administration set (including drip chamber with sharp) is disposed of into the yellow bag.
b. Complete administration set (including drip chamber with sharp) is disposed of into the orange bag.
c. Complete administration set (including drip chamber with sharp) is disposed of into the sharps bin.
d. Drip chamber/sharp are detached from the administration set line and the drip chamber/sharp disposed of in the sharps bin and the rest of the administration set line disposed of in the yellow bag.
e. Drip chamber/sharp is detached from the administration set line and the drip chamber/sharp disposed of in the sharps bin and the rest of the administration set line disposed of in the orange bag.
f. Other (please state)

Response

Please find attached the response for NHS Borders:

FOI 427-23 Response Data.xlsx

If you are not satisfied with the way your request has been handled or the decision given, you may ask NHS Borders to review its actions and the decision. If you would like to request a review please apply in writing to, Freedom of Information Review, NHS Borders, Room 2EC3, Education Centre, Borders General Hospital, Melrose, TD6 9BS or foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk.

The request for a review should include your name and address for correspondence, the request for information to which the request relates and the issue which you wish to be reviewed. Please state the reference number **427-23** on this request. Your request should be made within 40 working days from receipt of this letter.

If following this review, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner and request an investigation of your complaint. Your request to the Scottish Information Commissioner should be in writing (or other permanent form), stating your name and an address for correspondence. You should provide the details of the request and your reasons for dissatisfaction with both the original response by NHS Borders and your reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome of the internal review. Your application for an investigation by the Scottish Information Commissioner must be made within six months of your receipt of the response with which you are dissatisfied. The address for the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner is, Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife.