



Tool Box Topic - Client Medication Reminders

During the course of the home based client care, it may become necessary for the Homewatch CareGivers personnel to remind clients to take their medications. . This is something that cannot be taken lightly as many of these medications are necessary for the care and comfort of the client and may, in fact, be lifesaving.

First and foremost, the caregiver should never accept the responsibility for assisting with a client's medication needs without a clear understanding and agreement between the client or their family/guardian and physician. It is also important that the care coordinator have proper instruction from the prescribing physician as to the most current list and, time when it should be administered and possible side effects and benefits as certain medications may cause changes in behavior or carry certain risks to the clients health that the care giver should be made aware of. As certain medications may have adverse interactions with other medicines, including over the counter drugs such as aspirin, or with certain foods, these possible side effects should be discussed in advance with the caregiver. It is also important that the Homewatch CareGivers provider be made aware of any possible changes in medications or dosage.

A Medication Reminder Record is available to reflect medication reminders given by the caregiver. This record may a useful tool in cases where a client may have to take different medications at different times in the day to ensure that all meds have been taken throughout the course of a day. In the event a client refuses to take prescribed medications, the caregiver should report the condition to the treating physician as well as a family member/guardian.

Many pharmacies will prepare prescriptions in dose packs that separate the necessary medications in to convenient blister packs, each containing a specific dosage. Some clients may use plastic "pill minders" that hold a daily dosage and allow the Homewatch CareGivers provider to visually ascertain whether the appropriate medications have been dispensed or not. It is important that the caregiver monitor that the client has sufficient medications on hand and notifies the treating physician or family member/guardian when the mediations are running low. This is particularly important with clients who receive their medications through mail-order pharmacies as there can be a time factor from the date of order to date of delivery.

One other area that the Homewatch CareGivers provider may have to deal with is the potential for abuse of drugs by the client or some other party. Any instance where it appears that medications may be missing or "short" should be immediately reported to Homewatch CareGivers supervisor as this presents a significant health issue and potential liability.



There are numerous courses regarding medication management on the [Homewatch CareGivers University](#) that will assist in training staff in relationship to compliance with home care regulations in your state.

- P1130 Assist with Self Administration of Medications
- P1159 Medical Error Prevention and Safety for CNA's