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PHARMACY & HEALTHCARE REGULATION

RPS case studies March 2008

In the Best Interests of the Patient?

Facts: A pharmacy engaged a locum who was alleged to have dispensed Lanzaprazole 15mg capsules against a repeat prescription calling for Lanzaprazole 30mg capsules on several occasions. The pharmacist admitted the error but maintained that he was acting in the best interests of the patient who had complained of sickness following consumption of the 30mg capsules which she had been prescribed. The pharmacist had obtained the consent of a locum GP at the patient's surgery to reduce to 15mg. The GP could not recall such a conversation and no contemporaneous record had been made. The pharmacist was also accused of attempting to mislead the Inspector by falsifying the records of the medication dispensed, which he denied (which the Disciplinary Committee rejected).

Result: Reprimand

Walls have Ears

Facts: A pharmacist employed as an Area Manager for a chain of pharmacies was accused of holding a confidential meeting with a pharmacist in a public place. It was also alleged that staffing levels at the pharmacy were likely to put the public at risk. The pharmacist denied that the conversation was overheard and that any patient confidential matters were discussed. After representations from us the Society took the view that the matters raised were employment related rather than professional/regulatory.

Result: Letter of Advice

Throwing Light on the Situation

Facts: A complaint originating from a PCT alleged the pharmacist had dispensed Xylometazoline 0.1% nasal drops 10mls against a prescription calling for Xylometazoline Hydrochloride nasal drops 0.05% 10mls and Atenolol tablets 100mg against a prescription for Atenolol 50mg tablets. Further dispensing errors were then discovered during the investigation and the pharmacist admitted responsibility at an early stage. Changes were made to the pharmacy to improve the systems and lighting.

Result: Letter of Advice

Importance of Signing SOPs

Facts: A Superintendent Pharmacist was included in the investigation of two pharmacists who had failed to record Controlled Drug purchases, dispensing errors and labelling errors. It was alleged that he failed to ensure staff read Standard Operating Procedures and the Inspector recommended a letter of warning. The Superintendent denied the allegations and maintained that the SOPs were prominently displayed within the pharmacy and that his practise had now been improved to ensure that all locums and permanent staff read and signed the SOPs.

Result: Letter of Advice

Continued

PHARMACY & HEALTHCARE REGULATION

CONTINUED

Miscommunication

Facts: Another Superintendent Pharmacist was involved in the investigation of a complaint that a pharmacist failed to supply sodium chloride tablets against a hospital discharge sheet. The Superintendent was criticised by the RPSGB for communication problems between the pharmacy, the surgery and the patient.

Result: Letter of Advice

“Harassment” by Face Paint

Facts: A pharmacy was the subject of a complaint by a rival store for using “harassing” marketing tactics. The Superintendent Pharmacist who was the subject of the investigation denied that the marketing of the opening of the new pharmacy had been inappropriate. Instead he averred that the balloons, face painting and steel band were attractive and enjoyable for the local community.

Result: Allegation dismissed

Forged Will

Facts: A pharmacist was accused of being a witness to a forged Will and the Inspector recommended a letter of advice advising the pharmacist never to witness a Will when he does not know the Testator. It was pointed out to the Society that advice by the Inspector was inaccurate and that, provided the pharmacist knew the identity of the person whose signature he was witnessing, there was no other obligation on him.

Result: No further action

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