

## Central Alerting System (CAS) alerts in Care Homes

### Key Points:

The implementation of CAS alerts is vital to ensure that care home resident's safety is maintained to national standards.

To ensure that a care home is signed up to receive all of the Central Alerting System (CAS) alerts, the care home will need to register for the system. The care home will then receive emails notifying them of new alerts.

It is important to ensure that the email address used for the CAS alerts is one that can be accessed via a number of staff members. However information governance and data protection requirements must be adhered to.

Care homes should have a system to ensure emails are checked regularly (daily checks are recommended), alerts are logged, screened for relevance, an action plan is developed when necessary, information is disseminated to staff and actions completed are documented.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has issued guidance about compliance with the Health and Social Care Act 2008. Their registration system focuses on services meeting essential standards of quality and safety. This system is focused on outcomes, including the views and experiences of people who use the service. The implementation of CAS alerts is vital to ensure that care home resident's safety is maintained to national standards.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) issue alerts on Medical devices, patient safety alerts and rapid response alerts; which all require to be acted upon and actioned within required timescales.

**To ensure that a care home is signed up to receive all of the Central Alerting System (CAS) alerts, the care home will need to register for the system. The care home will then receive emails notifying them of new alerts.**

Email [safetyalerts@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:safetyalerts@dh.gsi.gov.uk) with the:

- name of the organisation
- first and last name of the recipient to receive the alert job title
- full postal address telephone
- email address
- fax number where available

PTO

The care home will receive a welcome email from the CAS system within 5 working days. If you do not received the welcome email contact the CAS helpdesk on 020 3080 6747.

It is important to ensure that the email address used for the CAS alerts is one that can be access via a number of people, however information governance and data protection requirements must be adhered to. This is to ensure that if one person is on annual leave, off sick etc. these alerts can still be accessed and actioned within the required timescales.

The CAS alerts include safety information about medicines and appliances as well as feedback from the National Reporting and Learning Service that enables healthcare professionals to learn from incidents. Access to the website is via; <https://www.cas.dh.gov.uk/Home.aspx> and a log-in is not required simply to read the alerts. Approximately 4-5 alerts are sent per month. The CAS website has an interactive help tool which will guide new users round the website – it can be found under the “help” button

Once a care home has signed up for the CAS alert system it would be advisable to set up a system within your home whereby:

- Someone is responsible for checking for CAS alerts at least daily and alerts are logged ( this will be useful evidence if required for CQC)
- They are then screened for relevance to the care home setting – if the alert is not relevant this should be documented in the log
- An action plan is developed where necessary information is disseminated to all staff
- Actions completed (if any) are documented

#### Further Information

- Further information on managing medicines in care homes is available in Outcome 9 and further information on care and welfare of people who use services in Outcome 4 of the [CQC Essential Standards](#).
- The Central Alert System website contains important information on alerts and urgent patient safety specific guidance to be accessed; <https://www.cas.dh.gov.uk/Home.aspx>
- Further information on medicines managements in Care Homes can be found: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/sc1>
- The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) provides guidance and advices on a number of topics, which is available on their website; [www.nmc-uk.org](http://www.nmc-uk.org)

*The above links are made available solely to indicate their potential usefulness to users. The user must use their own judgment to determine the accuracy and relevance of the information they contain.*

Based on guidance produced by Oxfordshire CCG

Good Practice Guidance documents are believed to accurately reflect the literature at the time of writing. However, users should always consult the literature and take account of new developments because these may affect this guidance

## Useful contacts:

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