

Refused Doses of Medication in Care Homes

This guidance is to support Care Home staff to take the most appropriate action(s) when a care home resident refuses to take medicines.

Care home residents may refuse medication for several reasons, including:

- the carer administering medication has changed
- the same medicines are refused repeatedly due to side-effects of the medication
- changes in behaviour or routines of resident mean that medicines at a particular time of day are refused
- the resident feels the medication is no longer needed or no longer works
- they cannot swallow the tablet/capsule or require help to take their medication

Key points for care home staff:

- Care home staff should record the circumstances and reasons why a resident refuses a medicine (if possible) in the MAR and care record. [NICE SC1 (1.2.3)]
- Contact pharmacist or GP if adjustments to medication are needed
- Never give medication to someone without their consent unless Covert Medicines Administration has been agreed and the appropriate process and documents have been completed.
- A refused dose of medication should never be doubled at the next medication round, this could be harmful
- **Remember residents have a right to refuse medication.**

The 6 R's of administration:

Right resident
Right medicine
Right route
Right dose
Right time
Right to refuse

Suggested actions to take when a resident refuses their medication:

