Health and Social Care Board

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Sent via Email
To: Clinical Governance Leads
Practice Managers
All Prescribers

Dear Colleague

RE: *Learning from Adverse Incidents: Configuration of Drug Interactions*

HSCB recommend **that all practices review the configuration of drug warnings on their clinical system, to ensure that prescribers are alerted to significant drug interactions**.

There have been a number of adverse incidents involving drug interactions reported to HSCB. For example, one incident occurred in which a clinically significant interaction between carbamazepine and clarithromycin was missed, resulting in patient harm and hospital admission due to carbamazepine toxicity. Following review of this and the other similar incidents, a significant contributing factor was that the configuration settings for drug interactions had been adjusted by the practice, to suppress the users' alert levels.

Action Required

We recommend that **system settings are checked across all computers and users within the Practice to ensure they are in line with BNF advice with respect to visible warnings that appear on the screen when prescribing a medication**. These may act as a reminder of possible clinically significant interactions or give the prescriber an opportunity to discuss and educate patients on possible side effects to be watchful for.

If you have any problems configuring your alert levels, or queries in respect of this advice, please contact your Clinical Systems Provider.

Yours sincerely

Margaret O'Brien

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