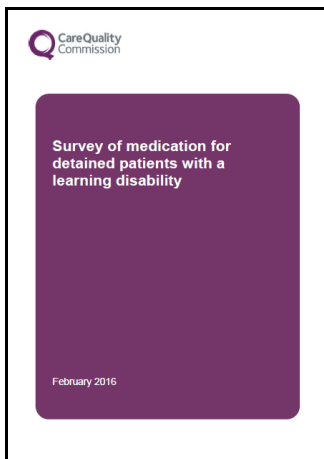


How medicines have been given to patients with a learning disability who are kept in hospital under the Mental Health Act

Easy read report

(February 2016)



This is an easy read version of the report called 'Survey of medication for detained patients with a learning disability'. It looks at how medicines were given to patients with a learning disability who are kept in hospital under the Mental Health Act, even if they don't want to receive treatment.

It is written by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). We check services like hospitals, doctors' surgeries and care homes to make sure they are giving good health and social care to people.

Summary



CQC manages a team of Second Opinion Appointed Doctors (also called SOADs), who visit people that are held under the Mental Health Act.

SOADs are doctors that look at other doctor's decisions about a patient. They look at care plans, listen to other people's views, and decide whether a patient should continue to receive treatment.

As part of this work, CQC receives information about the type and the amount of medicines that patients are given, and what types of mental health issues they have.

What we looked at



Because of the poor care and the abuse of patients at Winterbourne View Hospital, CQC was asked to look at the information we had collected about medicines given to patients with learning disabilities by SOADs.



We looked at this information for 796 patients whose treatment happened between October 2012 and August 2013.

Our findings

1. Medicines might not treat patients' illness



Over half of the medicine given to patients would not necessarily treat their illness. This is partly because companies that make the medicine do not think about the needs of patients with a learning disability.

2. Medicines that can change a person's thoughts, feelings and behaviour



Patients can be given medicine that can change how they think, feel and behave.

- Nearly a quarter of patients were given more than 1 type of these drugs regularly.



- Nearly 6 out of 10 patients were given more than 1 type of these drugs when the doctor decided it was needed.
- And 4 out of 10 patients were given 5 or more of these drugs when the doctor decided it was needed.

3. Medicines that treat patients' mental health illnesses



- Most patients are given medicine to treat their mental illness. These illnesses can include schizophrenia and depression.
- Nearly 9 out of 10 patients were given 1 or more types of this medicine regularly.



- Over 1 in 10 patients were given an amount of this medicine regularly that is above the national recommended amount.



- There could be as many as a third of patients that are given this high amount because they are given medicine when the doctor decides it is required.

4. SOAD changes to patients' treatment plans



- A quarter of patients' treatment plans were changed by SOADs after they had checked them.



- However, in many cases, the SOAD agreed with the high amounts of medicines.

Looking closely at our findings



We know that the information about the medicines is correct, but we are not so sure about the information about patients' illnesses. Therefore we can't know for sure what lessons to take from this report, but there are some things to look out for.



- The findings do not tell us if medicines were given to help change a patient's behaviour or to help treat a mental illness.



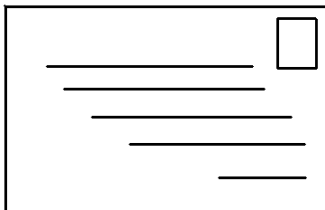
- If medicine was given to change a patient's behaviour, this might be because staff did not know other (and possibly better) ways to change the patient's behaviour.



- The Government has said that other ways should be used to change the behaviour of patients with learning disabilities as much as possible.

- Therefore, in future, SOADs may need to think harder about whether using high amounts of medicines is the right treatment for patients.

Getting in contact with us



If you would like this report in another format or language, or you would like to tell us something, you can contact us at:

Phone: **03000 61 61 61**

Email: **enquiries@cqc.org.uk**

Website: **www.cqc.org.uk**

Post:

Care Quality Commission

Citygate

Gallowgate

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE1 4PA

Twitter: **@CareQualityComm**