

## **Working under a PGD in Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment (CRHT) during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

When healthcare professionals operate within a PGD there is an expectation that they will see the patient in a face-to-face meeting to make their professional assessment. While this continues to be the standard we should aim for it might not be possible in the community setting where patients, families or staff are adversely affected by COVID-19 and there are acute clinical concerns.

For this reason, we hereby assure staff working within a PGD written for our CRHT teams that the organisation supports them in making professional clinical decisions when face-to-face meeting with the patient is not possible because of COVID-19 related disruption in the community setting.

Such practice carries extra risks and the healthcare professional must ensure that they document the specifics of the situation and the approach taken to clinical decision making within the patient's clinical record. It must be clear to colleagues who subsequently prescribe for or advise the patient that the usual assessment process has not been fully completed, so that they can make their own judgement about risks, benefits and mitigations. Clinical decisions should consider medication safety given the physical health risks of COVID-19 infection where relevant, such as the inhibition of respiratory function by benzodiazepines. Please refer to the guidance issued by the Trust about psychotropic medication and COVID-19.

If the member of staff feels unsafe to proceed within the PGD then they should seek alternative ways for their team to support the patient.

For practical reasons we will not make changes to the wording of PGD documents themselves.

Please note that this flexibility applies only to the CRHT teams' process of assessing patients in the community and not to other teams or settings. All other requirement of working within a PGD, such as the quantities that can be supplied, remain unchanged.

If supplying medication to a patient's house please follow a safe and secure procedure for doing so to minimise the risk of infection while ensuring the medication reaches the right patient and there is no risk of children or pets coming into contact with the medication, for example:

- Telephone the patient
- Leave the medication on the doorstep
- Step back to a safe distance
- Observe the patient or carer picking up the medication

Please see the Trust's Medicines Code for further information.

Approved by:

Stephen Jones, Chief Pharmacist

Dr. Mark Broadhurst, Deputy Medical Director

Carolyn Green, Director of Nursing and Patient Experience