Using medication to manage behaviour problems among adults with a learning disability.

Main Recommendations

- The prescriber needs to ensure that an assessment has been conducted and recorded prior to initiating treatment.
- The prescriber should ensure that an appropriate formulation is carried out and a treatment plan drawn, prior to instigating any interventions.
- The prescriber needs to ensure that appropriate physical examinations and investigations have been carried out.
- The prescriber is responsible for assessing the person's capacity to consent to treatment.
- The prescriber should discuss the formulation and treatment plan with the person and/ or their family or carers.
- The prescriber should allow the person and/ or their family or carers to influence the decisions that are made and included in the treatment plan.
- The prescriber should clarify to the person and/ or their family or carers if the medication is prescribed outside their licensed indication. If this is the case, they should be told about the type and quality of evidence that is available to demonstrate its effectiveness.
- Where possible, and when necessary, the prescriber should discuss the formulation and treatment plan with other relevant professionals.
- The treatment plan should be part of a broader care plan that takes a person-centred approach.
- The treatment plan must comply with the country's legal framework, including the relevant Mental Health Act.
- The formulation and treatment plan should be shared with all the relevant parties, including GPs, as soon as possible.
- The prescriber should identify a key person who will ensure that medication is administered appropriately and communicate all changes to the relevant parties.
- The prescriber should provide the person and/ or their family or carers with a written treatment plan at the time of prescribing. If the prescribing is done over the phone, it should be followed by written confirmation as soon as possible.
- The prescriber should discuss with the person and/ or their family, carer or key person common and serious adverse events related to the treatment (where possible, they should provide accessible information in writing). The prescriber should advise what action to take if a serious adverse event takes place.
- The consultation should take into account the communication needs of the person.
- When 'prn'/ 'as required' medication is prescribed, the prescriber is responsible for providing as much information as possible about why and when the medication may be used. The prescriber should monitor this information regularly.
- The method and timing of the assessment of treatment outcome should be set at the beginning of the treatment, along with a follow-up date for review of treatment progress.
- As far as possible, there should be an objective way to assess outcomes (the use of standardised scales is recommended).
- The prescriber should ensure that follow-up assessments have taken place.
- As far as possible, one medication should be prescribed at a time.
- As a general rule, the medication should be used within the BNF recommended range of doses.
- Consideration for withdrawing medication and exploring non-medication management options should be ongoing.
- The prescriber should remember that medication might be used at the same time as non-medication managements.
- The prescriber should document all appropriate information and share it with appropriate individuals when necessary.

Supported by

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