



CARE HOME GOOD PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS ADMINISTERING TOPICAL MEDICATION

(This doesn't include ear, eye and nose preparations)

DIRECTIONS

All topical medication should have clear directions on the MAR (medication administration record) and label, to include:

- How much to apply? e.g. thinly, liberally etc.
- How often to apply? e.g. once a day, twice a day etc.
- Detailed information on where to apply e.g. to lower right leg, to all dry areas of skin on the arms etc.
- If applicable, for how many days

HOW TO APPLY

- Topical medication applied to the care home resident's skin should be applied by a staff member wearing disposable gloves in the direction of the hair growth for maximum absorption.
- Topical medication must be applied according to the prescription instructions, LIMOS recommend that a separate topical MAR is used, which explains the name of the topical preparation, site of application, frequency of application, quantity to apply and have a body map; the area requiring application should be high-lighted/marked on the body map. Some pharmacies supply topical MARs already printed or you can use the topical MAR example attached, this must be handwritten and countersigned by another care worker.
- The topical MAR can be kept with the residents MAR in the MAR folder or if it is care home policy, in the resident's room, so it can be signed after administration.
- If applying an emollient and steroid preparation together apply the emollient first. Wait 10-15 minutes after applying an emollient before applying a steroid preparation. Steroids should be labelled as "apply thinly." Products not containing steroids can be applied more liberally. If you are not sure which products contain a steroid, seek advice from the GP, community pharmacist or LIMOS.
- Within the care home setting, staff undertaking medicines administration (including signing of the MAR) are required to have completed medication training and be assessed as competent before undertaking this task. Care workers who are not otherwise responsible for the administration of medicines may still apply topical medication if this practice is included within their care home medication policy. However they must have had sufficient training, understand their responsibilities and be competent to apply topical medication in accordance with their medication policy.
- When opening topical medication, always write the date opened on the container label of the preparation.
- If improvement to the skin is not visible or the affected area of skin gets worse after applying, please contact the GP.
- Topical products should only be applied to the area it's prescribed for. If there are new skin complaints, contact the GP. Note: Residents using emollients should avoid smoking or going near naked flames due to fire risk from use on skin or clothes/bedding in contact with these products. See MHRA alert July 2020 for full details & advice including around recommended washing of clothing and bed linen <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safe-use-of-emollient-skin-creams-to-treat-dry-skin-conditions>

HOW TO RECORD

If the **SENIOR CARE WORKER/NURSE** applies the topical medication, they **MUST** sign the residents MAR and if available, the topical MAR. If the responsibility is split and the **CARE WORKER** applies the topical medication rather than the **NURSE/SENIOR CARE WORKER** they **MUST**:

- Write on the topical MAR if this is care home policy or in the daily care notes to say that they have administered the topical medication, noting the name of the medication, the date and time they have applied it and their initials.
- Notify the **SENIOR CARE WORKER/NURSE** responsible for administration of medicines for that medication round that they have administered the topical medication
- The **SENIOR CARE WORKER/NURSE** responsible for the administration of medicines during the medication round, **MUST** then complete the residents MAR, the administration box should be entered with the appropriate code to denote Care worker e.g. O for other or C for care worker (add this to the codes on the bottom of the MAR if possible).
- Then on the reverse of the MAR complete the date, care worker's name (who applied the topical medication), name of topical medication and time they applied it.
- The MAR box should never be completed before a topical medication is applied. The MAR box should never be left blank, unless the medication is "prn" and not required at that time. Add the applicable code used when appropriate.

