

Medication Without Harm



WHO Global Patient Safety Challenge

**MEDICATION
WITHOUT HARM**
Global Patient Safety Challenge



World Health
Organization

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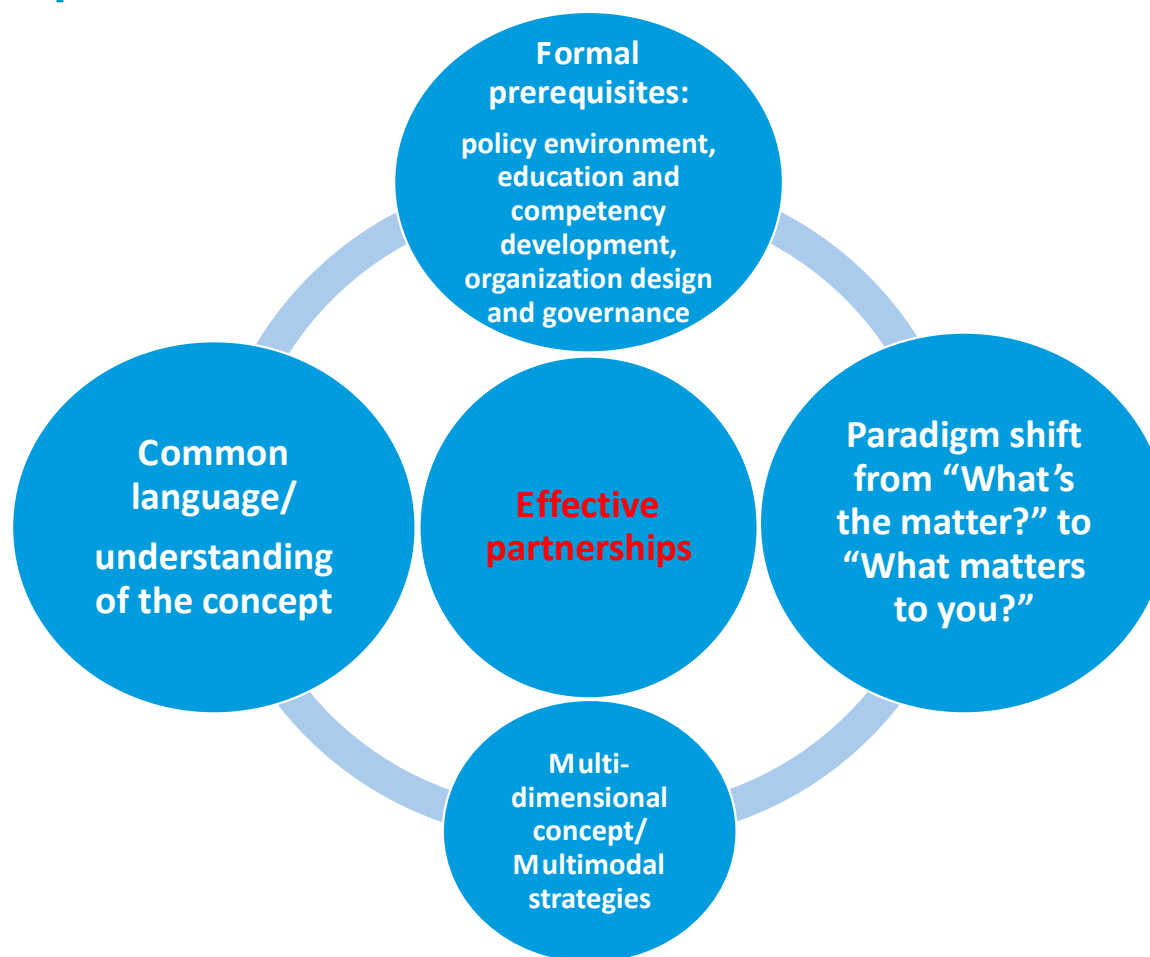
Patients, families and health workers partnering for medication safety

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WHAT are the prerequisites for effective partnership between patients, their families and health workers?



WHY it is important and WHAT are the key principles?



- **Strong evidence-base: partnering with patients and their families to take greater control of decision-making improves medication safety and contributes to reduction of harm**
- **Patients are more likely to follow through on decisions that are made in partnership**
- **No “one-size-fits-all” strategy: contextual considerations**
- **Step-by-step approach: patients should be better prepared and able to work in partnership, and more likely to achieve improved outcomes through taking small achievable steps, developing confidence, knowledge, and skills to better self-manage**



WHERE to partner with patients and families for medication safety and WHO is responsible?



WHERE?

- Visit to a primary health care facility
- Referral to another health care facility or to another health professional
- Visit to a pharmacy
- Admission to a health care facility
- Transfer to another health care facility
- Discharged from a health care facility
- Receiving treatment and care at home or in a nursing home



WHO?

- Family doctor/GP
- Specialist doctor
- Pharmacist
- Nurse
- Physician assistant

WHAT are the practical steps to establish/improve partnership for medication safety?



Understanding the target audience

- Who is the patient – collecting full history, asking about pre-existing conditions, allergies and other medications, individual circumstances, lifestyle and daily routine
- Partnering with families in case of children, the elderly, patients with mental health conditions or in critical situation
- Paying special attention to the risks associated with taking medications if pregnant/or breastfeeding

Adapting language

- Understanding cognitive abilities
- Clarifying if the patient clearly understands all medication instructions and explaining as required
- Applying different approaches, such as teach-back method/show-me method
- Using simple, non-technical, patient-centred language (condition versus disorder, pain medicine versus analgesic)

Clarifying roles

- Emphasizing the responsibility of the patients in their care
- Empowering and engaging patients in shared decision-making
- Encouraging and welcoming questions from patient and their family members
- Reassuring joint responsibility

WHAT are the practical steps to establish/improve partnership for medication safety? (1)



Moment 1: Starting a medication

Full information about medication	Risks and possible side-effects	Other treatment options
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Specifying medication name (or active ingredient)➤ Explaining why the medication has been prescribed➤ Specifying the brand and generic name of the medication➤ Drawing attention to sound-alike and look-alike medications➤ Explaining how the patient will know if the medication is working or helping them➤ Discussing storage conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Explaining the difference between side-effects and adverse events➤ Mentioning key possible risks and side-effects related to each medication and the likelihood of a side-effect to appear	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Discussing traditional and complementary medications➤ Considering physical therapy or lifestyle changes➤ Providing the reason for choosing this treatment plan➤ Referring to other health professionals as required

WHAT are the practical steps to establish/improve partnership for medication safety? (2)



Moment 2: Taking my medication

Treatment plan	Dose and administration	Actions in case of a missed dose and side-effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Developing the plan together, based on a lifestyle and daily routine ➤ Indicating the frequency and recommended time to take medication ➤ Providing written information on the prescription slip or any other form ➤ Explaining when the medication should be taken and how it relates to daily activity, food and drinks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Indicating the dose, the form and route of administration of the medication ➤ Explaining preparation tips, additional devices and technique ➤ Explaining any activities that should be avoided after taking medication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Indicating when to seek help/advice from health worker and how it should be addressed ➤ Explaining the difference between a side-effect and an adverse event ➤ Advising when to consult a health worker ➤ Asking about symptoms, analyzing information and providing information ➤ Referring to another health professional or health care facility

WHAT are the practical steps to establish/improve partnership for medication safety? (3)



Moment 3: Adding a medication

Understanding the need	Possible interactions	Multiple medications
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Evaluating the patient's condition, and any additional complaints➤ Check supporting documentation (laboratory and diagnostic test results) and referring, as needed➤ Listening, understanding, responding to concerns and helping to understand the role of additional medication, pros and cons, alternatives➤ Discussing and ensuring that patient is comfortable with accepting the revised treatment plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Reviewing medical conditions and explaining what should be done to avoid any consequences➤ Discussing the signs and symptoms of possible medication interactions and what the patient should do (not engaging in self-treatment, contacting health worker)➤ Explaining circumstances under which medication should or should not be stopped in case of interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Self-reflecting if the added medication is essential for the patient, recognizing that sometimes the risk of poorly managed medications can exceed the benefit of adding a medication➤ Enquiring about home situation, support and cognitive abilities➤ Suggesting having a medication list (digital formats) and emphasizing the importance of following the medication plan

WHAT are the practical steps to establish/improve partnership for medication safety? (4)



Moment 4: Reviewing my medication

Medication list	Duration of treatment	Reviewing medications
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Suggesting having a medication list and completing that together➤ Identifying the responsible person for managing the medication list➤ Updating the medication list every time the patient comes for an appointment➤ Suggesting using a mobile application or any other technology supplement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Clearly indicating the overall duration of treatment and specific duration for each medication➤ Suggesting that patients mark medication start and stop dates on their personal calendars➤ Checking for duplicate or inappropriate medication/s or inappropriate doses regularly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Reviewing and updating the patient's medication list on a regular basis, asking about the best way to do that and scheduling appointments➤ Informing patients about necessary laboratory tests or other measurements

WHAT are the practical steps to establish/improve partnership for medication safety? (5)



Moment 5: Stopping my medication

Treatment outcomes

- Discussing how the medication has worked, the treatment/symptom relief or other outcomes that demonstrated that the medication did not work and should be stopped
- Paying attention to medication/s that may need continuous adjustment of the dose throughout the overall treatment duration
- Explaining how each medication should be stopped

Running out of medications, expired medications and leftovers

- Encouraging to check personal stocks of medication/s regularly and renewing that in advance
- Referring to the responsible person for refilling the stock
- Discussing the issue of substandard and counterfeit medications
- Advising patients to dispose all expired and leftover medication/s and explain how to safely do so
- Drawing attention to the importance of checking the expiration dates

Adverse event

- Explaining the difference between side-effects and adverse events
- Encouraging to report any adverse event to a (prescribing) health worker immediately
- Making it a habit to use the adverse event reporting systems
- Providing patients with information on available reporting sources for adverse events and encouraging their use (filing the report)

5 Moments for Medication Safety

Guidance for health professionals



- The tool aims to engage and empower patients to be involved in their own care
- It should be used in collaboration with health professionals, but should always remain with the patients, their families or caregivers
- Health professionals are responsible for introducing the tool to patients, their families and caregivers, and support them in answering the questions and addressing any concerns
- The **Guidance for health professionals** provides some tips on the information that is critical to consider while answering the questions pertaining to each moment in medication use as well as to take specific action in certain cases
- The tips are not prescriptive or exhaustive. They should be chosen and adapted based on the specific context and setting



Medication Without Harm




5 Moments for Medication Safety



- Starting a medication**
 - What is the name of this medication and what is it for?
 - What are the risks and possible side-effects?
 - Is there another way of treating my condition?
 - Have I told my health professional about my other health conditions?
 - How should I store this medication?
- Taking my medication**
 - When should I take this medication and how often?
 - How should I take the medication?
 - Is there anything related to food or drink when taking this medication?
 - What should I do if I miss a dose of my medication?
 - What should I do if I have side-effects?
- Adding a medication**
 - Do I really need any other medication?
 - Have I told my health professional about the medication I am already taking?
 - Can this medication interact with my other medication?
 - What should I do if I suspect an interaction?
 - Will I be able to manage multiple medications?
- Reviewing my medications**
 - Do I keep a list of all my medications?
 - How long should I take each medication?
 - Am I taking any medication that I don't need?
- Stopping my medication**
 - When should I stop taking this medication?
 - How should I stop taking this medication?
 - What should I do if I stop taking this medication?

The 5 Moments for Medication Safety are the key moments when action by patients, their families and caregivers can greatly reduce the risk of harm associated with the use of medicines. Some are self-reflective for the patient, others are for the health professional to be answered and reflected upon. This tool for patient engagement has been developed by the World Health Organization as part of the Medication Without Harm Challenge.

It is intended to engage patients in their own care, to help them understand the medicines they are taking, and to help them make decisions about the medicines they are taking, and to help them make decisions about the medicines they are taking.

This tool is intended for use by patients, their families and caregivers, and health professionals, at all levels of care and across all settings.



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For more information, please visit: <https://www.who.int/initiatives/medication-without-harm>

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- Taking my medication
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GO TO YOUR NOT

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Click here to see the questions

GO NEXT

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