

Appendix 15 – NICE Visual Aid - Reviewing Medicines Associated with Dependence or Withdrawal Symptoms (1)

Reviewing medicines associated with dependence or withdrawal symptoms

This is a summary of recommendations 1.4.5 and 1.4.6 in the [NICE guideline on medicines associated with dependence or withdrawal symptoms](#). It is intended to support healthcare professionals carrying out medicines reviews for people taking an opioid, benzodiazepine, gabapentinoid, Z-drug or antidepressant. It is not an exhaustive list but should supplement standard practice for reviews, including the [advice on reviewing medicines in the NICE guidelines on medicines optimisation](#) and [medicines adherence](#). The guideline includes more detailed information on reviewing medicines (section 1.4) and making decisions about withdrawing medicines (section 1.5) using a collaborative and person-centred approach.

Regularly review the person's medicines and update their management plan

At each medicines review for people taking an opioid, benzodiazepine, gabapentinoid, Z-drug or antidepressant, discuss:

- The benefits and risks of continuing the current dose, adjusting the dose or stopping the medicine
- The benefits or harms the person is experiencing from continuing the medicine
- Any signs that the person is developing problems associated with dependence such as:
 - running out of a medicine early
 - making frequent requests for dose increases
 - reporting that a medicine that was working well previously is no longer working
- The person's preferences for continuing the current dose, adjusting the dose or stopping the medicine
- Who to contact if they have problems or concerns

Agree and update the management plan with the person and give them a copy

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