



Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

Law and Ethics Bulletin

Handling medicinal products with similar names

Following a recent case considered by the Society's Investigating Committee, pharmacists are advised of the need to be particularly vigilant when dispensing medicines which have similar names to each other, especially those with the same strengths.

When orders from suppliers are unpacked, extra care should be taken to ensure that such medicines are placed on the correct dispensary shelf to minimise the risk of picking the wrong product for dispensing. Consideration should be given to separating medicines on the dispensary shelf that have similar names to reduce the risk of dispensing errors. Referring to the near miss log may also assist in identifying those medicines that more likely to be picked erroneously.

Examples of medicines with similar names

Medicine Name	Medicine Name
Amiodarone	Amiloride
Clotrimazole	Co-trimoxazole
Fluoxetine	Fluvoxamine
Gliclazide	Glipizide
Hydroxyzine	Hydralazine
Mercaptopurine	Mercaptamine
Procyclidine	Prochlorperazine
Risedronate	Risperidone
Tramadol	Trazadone