MEDICATION MOMENTS A COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Remember: Every medication round is an opportunity to prevent harm, improve resident outcomes, and uphold the quality and safety standards expected in Australian residential aged care.		**The Right Resident Every Time** Always verify resident identity before administering medication. Use approved identification processes and never rely solely on room number or familiarity. **Key message: Familiarity is not identification.**	**Prevention improves outcomes** Immunisation is a safe and effective way to protect against vaccine preventable diseases. **Key Message: Every vaccination is an opportunity to prevent infection, protect residents, and contribute to a safer aged care environment.**	**High-Risk Medication Alert** Anticoagulants, insulin, opioids, and antipsychotics are considered high-risk medicines and require extra vigilance. **Key message: Slow down when handling high-risk medicines.**	**Schedule 8 Medicines Security** Always maintain the security, storage, and documentation requirements for Schedule 8 medicines. **Key message: Every dose must be accounted for.**	**Avoid Selection Errors** Many medicines have similar names or packaging. Examples: hydrALAZINE vs hydrOXYzine flucLOXACILLIN vs flucONAZOLE **Key message: Read the entire label every time.**
Crushing Medications Not all tablets can be crushed. Modified release, enteric-coated, and certain hazardous medications may be unsafe to crush. **Key message: Check before you crush.**	**Insulin Safety** Insulin is a high-risk medicine. Verify: Correct resident Correct insulin product Correct dose Correct administration time **Key message: A small error can have serious consequences.**	**Timing Matters** Some medicines require administration at specific times to achieve the desired effect. Examples: Parkinson's medications Diabetes medications Antibiotics **Key message: Time is part of the prescription.**	**Observe Before You Administer** Review relevant observations before administration, examples: BP before antihypertensives Heart rate before beta blockers Blood glucose before insulin **Key message: Assess first, administer second.**	**Safe Antipsychotic Use** Antipsychotics should not be used simply for convenience or behavioural control. **Key message: Always consider non-pharmacological approaches first.**	**Allergy Verification** Check documented allergies before administering medicines and ensure allergy records remain current. **Key message: Every medication round starts with an allergy check.**	**Medication Refusal** Residents have the right to refuse medications. Document: What was refused Reason for refusal Actions taken Notification of appropriate clinicians **Key message: Record the refusal, not just the omission.**
Polypharmacy Risks Many residents take multiple medications, increasing the risk of: Falls Delirium Adverse drug reactions Hospitalisation **Key message: More medicines can mean more harm.**	**PRN Medications Need Assessment** PRN medicines should only be given for a documented clinical need and after appropriate assessment. **Key message: No symptom, no PRN.**	**Sedation and Falls** Sedating medicines commonly contribute to falls. Common examples: Benzodiazepines Antipsychotics Opioids Sedating antidepressants **Key message: Consider medicines whenever a resident falls.**	**Recognise Adverse Drug Reactions** Not all clinical deterioration is disease related. Watch for: Rash, Dizziness, Confusion Constipation, Bleeding **Key message: New symptoms may be medicine-related.**	**Antimicrobial Stewardship** Only use antimicrobials when clinically indicated and review therapy regularly. **Key message: The right antimicrobial, for the right infection, for the right duration.**	**Documentation Matters** If it wasn't documented, it wasn't done. Ensure medication administration records accurately reflect administration, omission, refusal, or wastage. **Key message: Documentation is a clinical responsibility.**	**Refrigerated Medicines** Many vaccines, insulin products, and some biological medicines require cold-chain management. **Key message: Incorrect storage can make medicines ineffective.**
Resident Leave and Medication Safety Ensure residents going on social leave have appropriate medication supplies and documentation. **Key message: Continuity of medication prevents harm.**	**Reducing Psychotropic Use** Regularly review psychotropic medications to ensure continued clinical need and informed consent requirements are met. **Key message: Review, reduce, and reassess whenever possible.**	**Reporting Medication Incidents** Medication incidents and near misses provide valuable learning opportunities. **Key message: Report to improve, not to blame.**	**Culturally Safe Care** honours each resident's traditions, beliefs, and choices throughout the year. **Key Message** **Supporting cultural celebrations helps residents maintain identity, connection, and a sense of home.**	**Hand Hygiene** is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of infections. Remember, gloves are not a substitute for hand hygiene. **Key Message** **Every medication round is also an infection prevention opportunity**	**Sometimes laughter really is the best medicine.** In residential aged care, moments of joy can be just as important as moments of clinical care. Laughter has been shown to reduce stress, improve mood, promote social connection, and may even help lower blood pressure and improve pain tolerance. A smile, a shared joke, reminiscing about funny memories, or participating in social activities can contribute to a resident's overall wellbeing and quality of life. **Key Message** **"A good laugh doesn't replace medication, but it can be a wonderful addition to good care."**	

Healthy Collective
It's good to be healthy.

A message from The Healthy Collective:
As we celebrate the festive season in all its diversity, may it bring happiness, rest, and time with loved ones. Thank you for your support this year, and we look forward to what we will achieve together next year.

If you would like to view more Healthy Handouts, scan the QR code