



Consumers Can Help Prevent Harmful Medication Incidents

## SafeMedicationUse.ca Newsletter

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### Medication Reviews in Long-Term Care Homes

Do you have loved ones living in a long-term care (or nursing) home? Do you have questions about their medications? A medication review with the pharmacist is a good time for residents, family members, and other caregivers to ask questions about medications or talk about any concerns.

SafeMedicationUse.ca received a report about a resident in a long-term care home who was mistakenly started on a medication called trazodone. This sleep medication should have been given to someone else with a similar name. The mistake was found a year later when a medication review took place. Because of the review, the error was noticed, and the medication was stopped. Afterwards, family members commented that their loved one had seemed more tired than usual over the past year, but they did not know to mention it.

#### SafeMedicationUse.ca has the following suggestions for families with loved ones living in a long-term care home:

- When you are told about a new medication for your loved one, be sure you understand why the medication was started. Ask if there are any side effects that you should watch for. Use the [5 Questions to Ask](#) to get the information you need.
- If you notice a change in your family member's health or behaviour, let the healthcare team know right away. Ask if there was a recent change in medication that might have caused it.
- Let the healthcare team know that you want to be involved in your loved one's medication review. Ask the healthcare team when the next medication review with the pharmacist will take place. The number of reviews planned per year may differ by province or territory.
- Feel free to ask questions about any of your loved one's medications at any time. This is especially important if your family member was recently in the hospital, as changes may have been made during the hospital stay.



#### Medication safety bulletins contribute to Global Patient Safety Alerts.

This newsletter was developed in collaboration with Best Medicines Coalition and Patients for Patient Safety Canada.

Recommendations are shared with healthcare providers, through the ISMP Canada Safety Bulletin, so that changes can be made together.

This newsletter shares information about safe medication practices, is noncommercial, and is therefore exempt from Canadian anti-spam legislation.