

## Patient Safety ALERT: Prescribing of Cytotoxic Medication for admitted Haematology and Oncology patients



**Following a number of patient safety incidents and near misses, please can all clinical staff be aware of the following:**

- Prescribing, prescription verification, and dispensing of cytotoxic medication for oncology and haematology patients can only be undertaken by appropriately trained staff;
- If a haematology or oncology patient is admitted between the hours of 9.00am and 5.00pm (Monday to Friday) they should be discussed with the oncologist or haematologist in the hospital, and if chemotherapy is to continue then only the oncology/haematology consultant/SPR/staff grade may prescribe this on the inpatient drug chart;
- For the acute hospital, cytotoxic medication for a haematology or oncology patient cannot be prescribed outside of the hours noted above, instead; discuss with the haematologist or oncologist on call at RDE or wait until next working day;
- Patients who are admitted to the hospital may not be well enough to continue their chemotherapy treatment;
- Patients should bring in their own chemotherapy medications to hospital to confirm their place in their treatment cycle;
- For community hospitals the prescriber may transcribe an original cytotoxic prescription onto the medication chart, however supplies will only be made against the original prescription and not the chart.

**FOR ACTION:**  
**Ensure that all clinical staff are aware of this when prescribing  
cytotoxic medication for oncology or haematology patients.**

For more information, please contact [c.overney@nhs.net](mailto:c.overney@nhs.net)