

An evidence summary inspired by safety discussions held at the WUTH Safety Summit

What is a druggle?

A druggle is a team huddle to discuss medications. The medical and nursing staff meet with the pharmacist to review medication harm, risks and near misses, so that processes can be improved.

Who is using druggles?

The druggle emerged from the SAFE programme being run by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, driven by the use of huddles to embed situational awareness on the ward¹.

Several NHS Trusts are using druggles, led by Leeds Teaching Hospital². Their Neonatal Unit holds a weekly druggle led by the pharmacist. It is a five minute presentation aimed at increasing MDT communication on medicines related topics, highlight areas for improvement and encourage discussion. It includes a hot topic, an anonymised error of the week (for real time feedback and learning), and results from the weekly prescribing standards audit. Feedback has been extremely positive and there are plans to roll out weekly druggles to all paediatric wards. Their work won an award for patient safety³.

West Hertfordshire has implemented huddles as part of the SAFE programme and Dartford and Gravesham have launched druggles in critical care. WUTH has begun some work in Neonatal to highlight the importance of situation awareness with regard to medication by producing a medicine newsletter.

How else can the druggle be used?

Meds IQ (a paediatric resource) suggests ways in which the druggle model could be implemented⁴.

Does it work?

The literature on the use of druggles is sparse as it is an emerging concept. Local work in NHS Trusts suggests it has potential to alert staff to common prescribing errors, to aid understanding of the pharmacists' interventions and ensure safer prescribing⁵.

Further reading

1. [Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, SAFE 5: The Huddle](#)
2. Shore H., Jackson J., Bell C. A huddle and a 'druggle' to improve patient safety on the neonatal unit. *Infant* 2017; 13(1): 7-9.
3. [First winners of new Yorkshire & Humber Academic Health Science Network awards](#)
4. [Meds IQ: Druggle](#)
5. [Watford General conference abstract: Improving situation awareness in prescribing: A medication safety huddle – the DRUG-gle \(Druggle\)](#)

For more details or to request an electronic copy of the below, or if you'd like an Evidence Bite on another topic, please contact the Library & Knowledge Service at wuth.lks@nhs.net or ext. 8610.