

MaPPs®

MERLs®

# Using MERLs® to Facilitate Discussion and Aid Medicines Compliance in Residential Care

## Cascade Care

### Key outcomes

- Promotes greater independence for the residents, giving them additional responsibility for taking and managing their medication effectively.
- Residents with learning difficulties received a form of communication support that was accessible and tailored to their communication needs.
- The CQC commented positively on Charlton House's use of the MERLs® leaflets.

**"The MERLs® leaflets were a helpful tool to initiate conversations about medicines, symptoms and side effects" –**  
Sue Brown, Deputy Manager at Charlton House

Cascade were provided with MERLs® leaflets to use with the residents at their Charlton House Care Home. Kirsty Ellis, Registered Manager at Cohen House, and Sue Brown, Deputy Manager at Charlton House, talk to us about their experience.

**"The format was helpful for people with learning difficulties who administer their own medication, creating and promoting independence for the individual" –**  
CQC Audit Dec 2019

### What are MaPPs® and MERLs®?

MaPPs® is a unique electronic health information system which provides up-to-date patient information on almost all medicines (licensed and unlicensed) available in the UK. It provides patient-friendly personalised medicines information summaries of what each medicine is, how to take it and its possible side effects.

Easy Reads Leaflet for John Wick 03/08/2020

Your medication is called **Amlodipine with olmesartan (Tablets)**

It is to help:



High blood pressure

How to take, use, give:



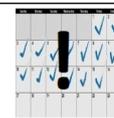
Swallow whole



Take with a drink



Take with or just after food



Do not stop suddenly

You may also: (tell a carer or doctor if any of these side effects worry you)



Get a red face



Get swollen feet, hands or ankles



Feel sick, be sick or get tummy pain

This is a handy easy read summary of your medicines. You must look at the manufacturer's information leaflet for the full information  
THIS IS FOR DEMONSTRATION PURPOSES ONLY

1/3

The MaPPs® system can be used to generate MERLs® (MaPPs Easy-Read Leaflets) which represent medicines information as simple images and short phrases for people whose first language is not English, or patients for whom communication is a challenge.

## Cascade

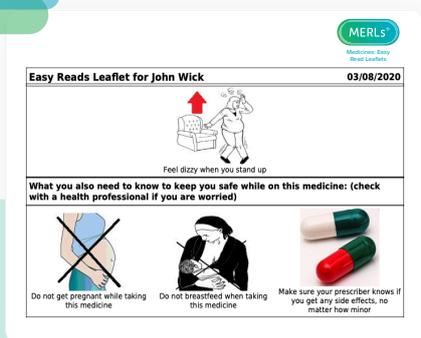
Cascade operates several care facilities located in the East of England, from Norwich and East Anglia, to Hull. They specialise in providing support to young people with autism, mental health conditions, and learning difficulties, who have verbal and non-verbal communication needs.

### Why is there a need for MERLs®?

It can be challenging to initiate meaningful conversations with residents about their medicines. If they are unsure about medication side-effects, it can be difficult to make the association between general discomfort or symptoms they are suffering as a result of medication.

### How picture leaflets helped residents...

The easy-read leaflets were a great help in supporting their residents with their medication. The use of images to visually illustrate how to take the medication, its uses, and possible side effects were found to be beneficial for the residents with learning difficulties.



By having these attributes listed, in an easy-to-understand way, our carers can initiate conversations and work with the residents to understand how their medication effects them and mitigate any ill effects.

#### Kirsty said:

“Our residents often struggle with taking their medication correctly, as the information provided to them is not always in a clear, accessible format. The MERLs® leaflets improved their understanding of this, which enhanced the support we were able to offer them as an organisation.”

“In a busy residential setting, time can be at a premium, the MERLs® leaflets were a good reminder for the staff to discuss medicines with the residents, empowering them to take more interest in their medicines, and aiding adherence.”

“They also served as a useful reminder to residents to understand what to look out for, as well as serving as an easy-to-digest medicines training aid. In some instances, our staff manage the administration of our resident’s medicines, in these cases the ability to use the MaPPs® system to generate Medicines Administration Records (MARs) and Medicines Reminders Charts (MRCs) could be very helpful.”

### Positive comments from the CQC

During their recent Care Quality Commission (CQC) audit at Charlton House officials were shown copies of the MERLs® leaflets. The leaflets formed part of a new support plan developed by Cascade to improve the descriptions of medications and their possible side effects.

The purpose of this was to create greater independence for their residents and give them additional responsibilities for managing and taking their medicines effectively. The CQC audit team stated that the use of the leaflets was a positive example of good practice. It was felt that this helped increase the independence, choice and understanding that is available to their residents

#### Kirsty commented:

“The CQC audit team acknowledged that the MERLs® information was a positive platform for us to use. It is something we will continue to use with our residents.”

“One of the key advantages of the leaflets is improving communication between our care staff and our residents.”

For more information and to watch a video all about MaPPs® visit:

[mappsorg.com](http://mappsorg.com)