

**DCF Psychotropic Medication Advisory Committee
MINUTES**

March 6, 2015 1:00 PM

500 Enterprise Drive, Suite 3D, Rocky Hill, CT

Present: Amy J. Veivia, Pharm. D.; Jason Gott, Pharmacist; Irvin Jennings, MD; Brian Keyes, MD; Beth Muller, APRN; Sherrie Sharp, MD

1. The meeting was called to order by Dr. Keyes at 1:10PM.
2. The next meeting is scheduled for April 10, 2015 from 1pm – 2:30pm; 500 Enterprise Drive, Suite 3D, Rocky Hill, CT 06067. The meeting will be held in the Litchfield Room. Please note that the April Meeting is being held on the 2nd Friday of April due to the state holiday on Friday April 3rd.
3. The minutes of the February 2015 meeting were reviewed and approved with minor changes.
4. Announcements:
There were no announcements.
5. Category of Medication reviewed:

Benzodiazepines and sleep aids:

The benzodiazepine category was reviewed last month and a recommendation was made that it be brought back in March to discuss adding tapering recommendations to the protocol. It was further suggested to include a restriction to the length of approval for the therapy.

There was much discussion regarding the variables that influence tapering schedules. Given the fact that tapering schedules should be individualized it was recommended that the following statement be included in the monitoring guidelines, "Discontinuation requires gradual tapering to avoid risk of seizures or withdrawal symptoms."

Discussion followed regarding restricting approvals of benzodiazepines to a limited timeframe. This discussion led to a request for additional information:

Amy Veivia will ask Dr. Harris if data is available for the number of requests/approvals for benzodiazepines, and which agents are requested.

Jason Gott will ask Heather Kissenger, the DUR Pharmacist from Health Information Designs that provides Drug Utilization Review Services for DSS, if benzodiazepine prescribing data is available for review. The PMAC Committee

is interested in finding out how many children are prescribed benzodiazepines, their ages, which agents are prescribed, and the length of therapy.

Following further discussion, it was recommended to include the following statement in the monitoring guidelines, "Benzodiazepines are not recommended in children and adolescents. Use with caution. Requests will not be approved for more than 30 days at a time."

6. New Format for Medications Data:

A modified format for the monitoring guidelines was presented and discussed. The modification included the addition of maximum daily dose information as well as a column for special considerations. A template from LA County Department of Mental Health was used as a comparator. It was noted that LA County has a table of medication data for each class of medications, similar to DCF's, but also has more detailed parameters for each medication class in additional documents.

A recommendation was made to incorporate the proposed additions to our guidelines for each medication class upon their scheduled review. The additions of maximum daily dose information and special considerations for the benzodiazepine class were approved.

7. Children 5 years of age and under: Is there need for additional data prior to initiating psychotropic medication?

This issue was presented for discussion and the committee agreed that additional data (i.e. concurrent/prior treatment and/or interventions) is important for all children and especially so for those under the age of 5. It was not known how many requests are received for the 5 and under population. It was recommended that the introductory statement to the monitoring guidelines be reviewed for possible inclusion of special considerations in this population.

8. Should stimulants be use as a first-line medication for the treatment of ADHD or is clonidine alone sufficient?

This issue was discussed and it was concluded that the evidence base supports the use of stimulants as first-line for ADHD unless there is some complicating factor that dictates otherwise. No further recommendations made.

9. Other business

A request was made to add Cymbalta to the agenda for next month.

10. Adjournment: the meeting was adjourned at 2:20pm.

Respectfully submitted: Amy Veivia, Pharmacist Consultant