

1. Background

This learning brief is about “Joan.” Joan was 85 when she died in a nursing home after becoming short of breath.

Joan had been living in the nursing home after discharge from hospital. She had restricted mobility and was increasingly frail.

2. Paramedic attendance

Paramedics were called to see Joan as she was short of breath. Joan was advised that she should go to hospital but declined this saying she wanted to remain at the nursing home.

The risk of remaining at the home was fully explored with Joan but she was adamant that she wanted to stay.

3. Supporting Mental Capacity

As Joan was short of breath the paramedics ensured that Joan's oxygen levels were at 100% so they could be sure that her physical health was not contributing to confusion, and she had the capacity to make an informed decision about her medical treatment. You can read the local Mental Capacity Act Guidance [here](#)

8. Main points

- When a patient declares an allergy, this should be recorded and shared appropriately with prescribers and administrators of medications
- Staff administering medication should have appropriate training
- When administering medication follow all steps to ensure patient safety



4. Conversations

The paramedics spoke with the GP whilst with Joan and explained the situation. The GP prescribed antibiotics for Joan as the paramedics said there were crackles on Joan's lungs.

The nurse on duty at the home was not part of this conversation!

7. Allergies continued

Discharge summaries from hospitals should be checked and cross referenced for allergies identified and known by GP practices. Mild adverse reactions should also be noted.

Joan's allergy to Amoxicillin was a mild allergy which caused a rash and not one that contributed to her death.

6. Allergies

When Joan had been in hospital previously, she had informed them that she was allergic to Amoxicillin. This was recorded on her discharge summary but not the NHS National Spine.

The nursing home had the allergy recorded on Joan's care plan but not the MAR form.

5. The prescription

The prescription was collected and administered to Joan. Normal protocol was not followed.

- It was not doubled checked
- It was not added to the Medication Administration Record (MAR) form before being administered

Joan

Medication

December 2023