



## April 2009 MEDICATION UPDATE

Chemist On Call is available 24 hours/365 days a year to perform medication checks for all employees working in the rail, construction and transport sectors.

Did you know that at least 10% of a working population is on medication at any point in time? Are you aware of the need for employees to check all medication each time they begin taking a new pain killer, cold remedy or have medication prescribed? Don't just tick a box! Make sure your employees are routinely checking their medication.

### 2008 Highlights

- **More than 98%** of all checks were performed within our target KPI of **under 1 hour**.
  - Callers were provided with important health advice alongside an accurate record of their medication check by fax or email.
- **More than 40%** of all medication checks performed recommended the individual have accompanied duties, could not work or had to see the occupational health physician.
  - Medication poses a health and safety risk to all safety critical roles.
- A **significant increase** in the number of individuals taking very strong pain killers containing **codeine**
  - Codeine is a restricted medication that will show up on a D&A screen.
- An **expanded team** of health co-ordinators and pharmacists in line with increased call demand from many new customers.

### Seasonal Medication Warnings

All new and existing medications must be checked. Common summer examples include:

- **Antihistamines** - two types - those that cause drowsiness (older remedies) and the non-sedating type (new remedies). If you take antihistamine medication that includes sedatives you will require all safety critical duties to be accompanied.
- **Travel Vaccinations** - prepare at least 3 months in advance of holiday.
- **Malaria Tablets** - can cause nausea, vomiting and dizziness. These drugs have to be taken before, during and for several weeks after a trip.
- **Travel Sickness Medication** - can cause drowsiness
- **Sickness & Diarrhoea Medication** - avoid taking medication that has a banned substance, such as morphine, as one of its ingredients.

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