Helping Andrew to stop taking the wrong medicines in Hertfordshire

Andrew is 30 years old and has a learning disability and autism, but he does not have mental health problems.

He lives in a residential home and has one-to-one support during the day.

In 2005, his doctors asked him to start taking a lot of medicine to attempt to manage his behaviour. This lasted for a long time.
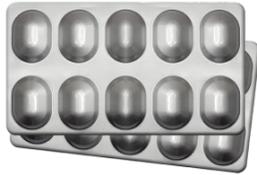
He was taking a medicine called olanzapine, to control his behaviour. This type of medicine is called an antipsychotic.

He was taking another medicine called carbamazepine, to control his mood.

He was taking a third medicine called propranolol, to treat physical problems he had when he became anxious.

These drugs are helpful for people with mental health problems.

But as Andrew did not have a mental health diagnosis, it was wrong for him to take these medicines.

Andrew put on weight and he felt more tired. These are common side effects of these drugs.

The doctors at Andrew's hospital, which was called Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust, wanted to reduce the amount of medicine he was taking.

They talked to Andrew about how they would do this.

Andrew stopped taking one drug at a time. This meant that he stopped in a slow and controlled way.

The plan worked. Andrew has stopped taking olanzapine and carbamazepine. He takes half the amount of propranolol.

He is less tired, more alert and finds it easier to say how he is feeling.

He now does more activities and goes out into the community more.

He can cope better with changes to his routine and uses strategies to control his behaviour.

Andrew has lost weight now he takes fewer medicines. Putting weight on was a side effect of his medicines.

The hospital doctors no longer need to be involved.

Andrew is being looked after by his local GP.

If you would like to know more about Andrew's story, please send an email to danielle.adams@hpft.nhs.uk or indermeet.sawhney@hpft.nhs.uk at Hertfordshire Partnership University Foundation Trust.

#CareTransformed
for learning disabilities,
autism or both

What is STOMP?

STOMP is a health project that goes on until 2019.

It stands for stopping over medication of people with learning disabilities, autism or both.

It is about making sure that people don't take medicines they shouldn't be taking.

It is about stopping the over use of psychotropic medicines.

These medicines have different names and do different things, but as a group they are called psychotropic medicines.

These medicines are for things like depression, anxiety, psychosis, sleep problems, or epilepsy medication if it is used for its calming effect, when you do not have epilepsy.

Psychotropic

Psychotropic medicines are any drug that affects the mind and your mental health.

Psychotropic medicine is sometimes used to help with behaviour which is seen as challenging, whether or not the person has a mental illness.

For example, if people are in danger of hurting themselves or other people.

You can read more about STOMP in easy read by going to: www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/ld-med-advice-easy-read.pdf

What to do if you need more help

If you need more help:

Ask your doctor for a medication review.

Please don't stop taking medicines without talking to your doctor first.

These helplines can also give general advice:

Mencap
Helpline 0808 808 1111, weekdays 9am-6pm
www.mencap.org.uk

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National Autistic Society
Helpline: 0808 800 4104, 10am - 4pm weekdays
www.autism.org.uk/helpline

Challenging Behaviour Foundation (CBF)
Family Support Line: 0300 666 0126
Monday – Thursday 9am – 5pm Fridays until 3pm
www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk