

## **Policy on Prescribing Medication for Patients Undergoing MRI Scans and Other Investigative Procedures**

### **Purpose**

To ensure the safe, consistent, and appropriate care of patients undergoing MRI scans and other investigative procedures.

### **Policy**

After careful consideration, our practice has decided to no longer prescribe diazepam for patients scheduled for MRI scans or other investigative procedures. This decision was made based on the following concerns:

#### **1. Effectiveness and Safety**

- Small doses of benzodiazepines, such as 2mg diazepam, are likely sub-therapeutic for most adults, offering minimal effective sedation.
- Anxiolytics can have idiosyncratic responses, potentially causing increased agitation in some patients even at very small doses.

#### **2. Timing and Efficacy**

- Patients may take a sedative an hour before their scheduled procedure, only to find the procedure delayed, leading to suboptimal timing and effectiveness of the medication.

#### **3. GP Expertise**

- General Practitioners (GPs) are not regularly trained or appraised in sedation skills, which are essential for safe administration and monitoring of sedatives.

#### **4. Hospital Resources**

- Hospital consultants, including those requesting and performing imaging, have the same prescribing abilities as GPs and are better positioned to provide necessary medication through hospital pharmacies or FP10 prescriptions.

#### **5. Monitoring Requirements**

- Sedated patients require regular monitoring. There have been instances where lack of monitoring following GP-prescribed sedation has led to serious complications, such as respiratory arrest during an MRI scan.

#### **6. Guidelines**

- The Royal College of Radiologists' guidelines on sedation for imaging do not include GP involvement in the provision of low-dose anxiolytics and emphasize the importance of experienced, well-trained staff and proper monitoring of sedated patients.

### **Recommendations:**

- Patients who feel they require sedation for an MRI or other investigative procedure should discuss their concerns with their radiologist or consultant.
- Hospital consultants are advised to prescribe and manage any necessary sedation to ensure patient safety and compliance with guidelines.

For further details, refer to the Royal College of Radiologists' guidelines on safe sedation for imaging: [Safe Sedation Guidelines]([https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.rcr.ac.uk%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fpublication%2FSafe\\_Sedation.pdf&data=05%7C02%7Craini.singh%40nhs.net%7C5f05a255613241912cf408dc8f923539%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638543105318927643%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoIMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTil6k1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C&sdata=O9gHaBhXDjGUNmlyt%2FSo7byyBp7D2qiXTe7mB4qfQFE%3D&reserved=0](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.rcr.ac.uk%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fpublication%2FSafe_Sedation.pdf&data=05%7C02%7Craini.singh%40nhs.net%7C5f05a255613241912cf408dc8f923539%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638543105318927643%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoIMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTil6k1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C&sdata=O9gHaBhXDjGUNmlyt%2FSo7byyBp7D2qiXTe7mB4qfQFE%3D&reserved=0)).