

■ **Intelligible**

- The wording of the information on the label must be in plain English, be easily understandable and use unambiguous terms. It must always be remembered that patients may feel embarrassed to ask for further clarification on the meaning of complicated words used on the label.

■ **Accurate**

- It is important that the title is accurate, the instructions are accurate and that the patient name is complete and accurate.

Dispensed type labels

In the UK, detailed requirements for labelling of medicinal products are contained in the Medicines Act 1968 and in amendments to that Act made by Statutory Instrument. The legislation distinguishes between labelling of a medicinal product for sale and labelling for a dispensed product when lesser requirements apply.

1. All labels for dispensed medicines must have the name of the patient – preferably the full name, not just initials – and if possible the title of the patient (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Master, Ms etc.) as this helps to distinguish between family members. The date and the name and address of the pharmacy are also legally required. This will normally automatically appear on most computer labelling systems with the date being reset automatically. The words ‘Keep out of the reach of children’ are also legally required, but most labels used for dispensing purposes are already pre-printed with these words.

KeyPoints

Remember, the label of a pharmaceutical product must be in the right place and contain the right information. The following need to be taken into consideration:

Appearance

- Correct position
- Clean
- Secure

Information

- Legible
- Concise
- Adequate
- Intelligible
- Accurate

2. All labels must state the name of the product dispensed, the strength where appropriate, and the quantity dispensed.

3a. Products for internal use

The title of an extemporaneous preparation should be given if it is an official product (i.e. one with an accepted formula that can be found in an official text). The title should be as quoted in the official text (for example, ‘Ammonia and Ipecacuanha Mixture BP’).

If it is an unofficial product (that is, a product made from an individual formula, for example, a doctor’s own formula) it may be labelled ‘The Mixture’ or ‘The Solution’ etc. Unofficial products must state the full quantitative particulars on the label (i.e. the formula must be stated on the label). For preparations