Medication Safety Through the Eyes of Junior Doctors

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Our role in medication safety

• Primary prescribers in the hospital system
• Prescription errors account for 70% of medication errors
• 7-9% of prescriptions have errors
Reasons we make prescription errors

Complex and multifactorial
Reasons – Work environment

• Most errors made on admission or ward round
• Time pressure leading to genuine mistakes or omissions
• Interruptions
• Pressure from other staff
• Perception that prescribing is low priority and low risk
• Abbreviations
• Faith that prescription will be interpreted correctly
Reasons – Inadequate Knowledge

• Unfamiliarity
• Limited education
• Poor availability of drug information especially after-hours
• Lack of support or supervision
Reasons – Communication Issues

• Multiple teams or prescribers involved
• Lack of ownership
• Hesitancy to change the prescription written by others
• Belief that someone else will intercept any errors
Possible Solutions

• Reduced workload and hours
• Education and leadership
• Easily accessible guidelines
• Pharmacist support
• Specialist involvement for specialist medications
• Medication charts
• Computerised prescribing
Thank You!