

# Case study: CCC actively monitors Child and Adolescent Health Service's investigation into missing medication

September 2017



**There are a number of options to ensure allegations received by the CCC are dealt with appropriately - including referring them back to the agency involved to action.**

The CCC received a notification from the Child and Adolescent Health Service (CAHS) about medication discrepancies in four liquid medicine bottles at a public hospital in January 2017. The CCC assessed the allegations, and under its criteria, determined it was appropriate to refer the matter back to CAHS to action, with the CCC actively monitoring and reviewing their investigation.

The CAHS investigation into the allegations of the missing medication did not find evidence of any theft by hospital staff. Instead, it found that the medication discrepancies were most likely a result of the method staff used to withdraw the liquid medicine from the bottles.

The CAHS investigation made a number of recommendations to reduce the likelihood of medication discrepancies occurring in the future,

and to assist with any investigations into such matters.

CAHS are currently implementing a number of actions, including:

- making improvements to the reporting process staff follow when they initially notice medication discrepancies in the hospital;
- providing investigative training to assist hospital staff to conduct appropriate enquiries into medication losses; and
- improving the collection of evidence of medication discrepancies at the first opportunity.

CAHS engagement with the CCC was very positive throughout the investigation. The CCC actively monitored and reviewed CAHS' actions and established that they were thorough and appropriate.

Loss of medication is a common occurrence in Western Australian hospitals, and if hospital staff notice medication discrepancies, it should not be overlooked or dismissed in any circumstances. Medication that is unaccounted for in hospitals poses a serious health risk for staff, patients and the public.

If you work in the health sector and suspect there are medication discrepancies in your workplace, you are encouraged to follow your organisation's internal reporting policy.

If you suspect medication theft by a colleague, you are encouraged to make a report to the Corruption and Crime Commission by calling 1800

809 000 or by completing a [confidential online form](#). These reports can be made anonymously.

### Additional resources

The CCC released a *Report on the Supply and Management of Schedule 8 Controlled Drugs at Certain Public Hospitals in Western Australia*, in June 2017.


This report noted that public hospitals should also consider monitoring after-hours access to the pharmacy and the pharmacy safe, developing practices to reconcile medication supplied with receipts, implementing regular policy compliance checks of staff, and introducing automated electronic storage and supply systems to address the supply and management of medication.

You can download a copy of the report below:

[Report on the Supply and Management of Schedule 8 Controlled Drugs at Certain Public Hospitals in Western Australia](#)

---

#### Contact the Corruption and Crime Commission

 PO Box 7667 Cloisters Square  
Perth WA 6850

 General Enquiries (08) 9215 4888  
Report Corruption 1800 809 000

 [www.ccc.wa.gov.au](http://www.ccc.wa.gov.au)

 [info@ccc.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@ccc.wa.gov.au)

 <https://twitter.com/CCCWestAus>