Immunisation against infectious disease

Update to Chapter 4

Immunisation procedures

p.31 Insert new section after Injection technique section:

**Use of multi-dose vials**

Some vaccines are specifically provided in multi-dose vials (e.g. BCG vaccine), which allows the vaccine to be administered from the same vial to a number of different individuals. These vaccines are clearly labelled as multi-dose vials and they are designed so that doses from the vials can be given to more than one individual. The length of time that a vial can be used for is specified in the SPC and this should be followed.

In contrast, most other products are licensed for use in one patient only. They are provided in vials intended for use as a single-dose and the contents should not be used to provide vaccination to more than one person. Therefore, the use of the residual product from these vials to administer to other patients is unlicensed and carries the risk of contamination.

Appropriate infection control and aseptic techniques should be used at all times and is particularly important when using multi-dose vials.

The following good practice guidance should be followed. The immuniser should make sure that:

- the expiry date has not passed
- vaccines are stored under appropriate cold chain conditions before and in between use
- the bung (vial septum) is visibly clean*
- a sterile syringe and needle are used each time vaccine is withdrawn from the vial
- the needle is not left in the vial for multiple redraws
- the vial should be clearly marked with:
  - the date and time of reconstitution or first use
  - the initials of the person who reconstituted or first used the vial
  - the period that the vaccine can be used for (as defined in the SPC).

*Where there is visible contamination then the bung can be cleaned with an alcohol swab. However, the bung should be left to dry before using as it is the drying process that kills contaminating organisms and residual alcohol could contaminate/inactivate vaccine.

p.33 Take in new reference in alphabetical order:


March 2011