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PolicySource™

Behavioral Health Care and Human Services



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- Some items in the Table of Contents are indicated as “updated.” This means that these policies and procedures (P&Ps) have been updated since the previous edition of *PolicySource*. These changes reflect updates in Joint Commission standards and elements of performance for behavioral health care and human services accreditation.
- Those items with a paper clip icon  are not P&Ps themselves but supplementary materials or attachments for a particular P&P. Not every P&P has such attachments, but that does not prohibit someone using *PolicySource* to create their own ancillary materials for any of their own P&Ps.

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Medication Control Policy

[Logo]	TITLE Medication Control Policy		IDENTIFICATION NUMBER
ORGANIZATION(S)	LEVEL <input type="checkbox"/> System <input type="checkbox"/> Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Division <input type="checkbox"/> Department	CATEGORY <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical <input type="checkbox"/> Management <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory	POSTING DATE EFFECTIVE DATE
REVIEW CYCLE <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year <input type="checkbox"/> 3 years LAST REVIEW DATE:		REPLACES TITLE: Medication Control Policy EFFECTIVE DATE(S):	

APPLICABILITY

This policy correlates to Joint Commission standards that require written documentation. See [Applicability Grids](#) for applicable services and settings.

POLICY STATEMENT

The organization stores, prescribes, dispenses, administers, and monitors medications, including sample medications, in a safe and secure manner.

PURPOSE

To establish a process that maintains medication safety in all phases of medication management—storage, handling, wasting, security, disposition, and return to storage—to minimize risk of harm from medication errors and to comply with relevant laws, regulations, and standards.

SCOPE

Applies to all staff who are involved in any aspect of the medication management process.

Applies to all medications and sample medications stored at the organization.

DEFINITIONS

Medication – Any prescription medications, sample medications, herbal remedies, vitamins, nutraceuticals, vaccines, or over-the-counter drugs; diagnostic and contrast agents used on or administered to persons to diagnose, treat, or prevent disease or other abnormal conditions; radioactive medications, respiratory therapy treatments, parenteral nutrition, blood derivatives, and intravenous solutions (plain, with electrolytes and/or drugs); and any product designated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as a drug. This definition of medication does not include enteral nutrition solutions (which are considered food products), oxygen, and other medical gases.

Sample medication – A unit of a prescription medication that is not intended for sale but rather to promote the sale of the medication. These are often provided by pharmaceutical sales representatives to pharmacists and physicians free of charge and by pharmacists and physicians to individuals served free of charge.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Unsupervised access to medications is the responsibility of only those personnel authorized by virtue of their license and/or job description.

Dispensing of medications is the responsibility of only those personnel authorized by the nature of their license (for example, physicians, pharmacists) and in accordance with federal and state law.

PROCEDURES

All procedures are performed by authorized licensed/certified staff, unless otherwise indicated.

Storing Medications

1. Ensure that all medications are stored according to manufacturers' recommendations. In the absence of such recommendations, medications should be stored according to pharmacist's instructions.
2. Ensure that all medications are stored in a secured area and locked when necessary, according to law and regulation.
3. Label all stored medications and the components used in their preparation with the following information:
 - Contents
 - Expiration date
 - Applicable warnings
4. Store food and/or specimens in a separate refrigerator.
5. Prohibit combining partial components of containers, even if labels are the same.
6. Prohibit returning excess medication to the stock/bulk container.
7. Follow all manufacturers' instructions regarding storage requirements for medications (for example, temperature, humidity, light).
8. Conduct medication storage inspections on each unit every month, and report findings to the unit manager.

Labeling Medications

1. Label all medications with the following information:
 - Drug name
 - Strength
 - Amount
 - Expiration date
 - Applicable warnings provided by the pharmacy
2. Discard any unlabeled medications immediately.
3. Retain for reference all original containers from medication in the procedural area.*
4. Discard original containers *only* at the conclusion of the procedure.
5. Review all medications and solutions and their labels at shift change or break relief. This review is performed by both entering and exiting personnel.

Handling Medications

1. Maintain control of medications at all times.
2. Keep medication in the unit-dose package until administration.
3. Adhere to the procedures described in the Controlled Substance Management Policy, as applicable.
4. Follow appropriate hand hygiene while preparing or handling medications.
5. Perform count of medication between receipt and administration.

Returning Medication to Stock/Return Bin

For medications in single-dose containers:

1. Return unopened containers to the return bin at the automatic medication dispensing cabinet.

2. Select “Print Slip” option on the automatic medication dispensing cabinet screen.
3. Wrap slip around the returned item.
4. Place item and slip into the return bin.

For medications in multiple-dose containers:

1. Open automatic medication dispensing cabinet drawer.
2. Withdraw required dose from container.
3. Return container to the automatic medication dispensing cabinet drawer.
4. Close the automatic medication dispensing cabinet drawer.

For controlled substances:

1. Perform return processes with another authorized licensed staff member to act as a witness.

For oversized items that do not fit in return bin:

1. Select “Print Slip” option on the automatic medication dispensing cabinet screen.
2. Write on the slip the location of the locked cabinet or drawer in which you will store the item.
3. Place slip in the return bin.
4. Close the automatic medication dispensing cabinet drawer.
5. Take the second return slip that is generated.
6. Wrap the oversized item in the second return slip.
7. Lock item and slip in the location you described on the first slip.
8. If the item is a controlled substance, add the item name and quantity to the inventory.

Discarding Medications

1. Remove all expired, damaged, and/or contaminated medications.
2. Dispose of all unused or partially used medications according to manufacturer’s instructions, applicable laws and regulations, and established organization policies and procedures.
3. Document the disposal of medications, including date, time, responsible individual, type of disposal, and other relevant details as determined by the organization.

REFERENCES

*Joint Commission Standard MM.03.01.01, EP 2. **For organizations that store medications:*** The organization stores medications according to the manufacturers’ recommendations or a pharmacist’s instructions.

*Joint Commission Standard MM.03.01.01, EP 3. **For organizations that store medications:*** The organization stores controlled (scheduled) medications to prevent diversion, in accordance with law and regulation.

*Joint Commission Standard MM.03.01.01, EP 4. **For organizations that store medications:*** The organization follows a written policy addressing the control of medication between receipt by staff and administration of the medication, including safe storage, handling, wasting, security, disposition, and return to storage.

*Joint Commission Standard MM.03.01.01, EP 6. **For organizations that store medications:*** The organization prevents unauthorized individuals from accessing medications in accordance with its policy and law and regulation.

*Joint Commission Standard MM.03.01.01, EP 7. **For organizations that store medications:*** The organization labels stored medications with the contents, expiration date, and any applicable warnings provided by the pharmacy.

Joint Commission Standard MM.03.01.01, EP 8. For organizations that store medications: The organization removes all expired, damaged, and/or contaminated medications and stores them separately from medications available for administration.

Joint Commission Standard MM.03.01.01, EP 18. For organizations that store medications: The organization inspects all medication storage areas periodically, as defined by the organization, to verify that medications are stored properly.

Joint Commission Standard MM.05.01.11, EP 2. For organizations that operate a pharmacy: The organization dispenses medications and maintains records in accordance with law and regulation, licensure, and professional standards of practice.

Joint Commission Standard MM.05.01.19, EP 1. For organizations that administer medications: The organization determines how it will manage unused, expired, or returned medications.

Joint Commission Standard MM.05.01.19, EP 2. For organizations that administer medications: When the organization accepts unused, expired, or returned medications, it follows a process for destroying the medications or returning the medications to a pharmacy's control which includes procedures for preventing diversion.

ATTACHMENTS

Controlled Substance Management Policy
Patient Identification Policy
Waste Management Policy

APPROVAL

NAME AND CREDENTIALS	NAME AND CREDENTIALS	
TITLE	TITLE	
SIGNATURE		DATE
SIGNATURE		DATE

* Text shaded yellow is content that goes above and beyond Joint Commission standards and, therefore, is not specifically required.