



## Medication Management Standards Newsletter

- Accreditation Canada Survey will take place September 19–23, 2016
- In this issue, we focus on Wardstock Medications and Medication Storage

- The VCH Accreditation Medication Management Standards Advisory Group is working on Accreditation Canada's Medication Management Standards to address improvement opportunities identified from the self assessments surveys conducted during the Spring of 2015.
- These standards focus on the safe and effective management of medications; and address all aspects of the medication use process from selection to patient administration.

### WARDSTOCK MEDICATIONS

Ideally all medication orders should undergo a Pharmacy review process for therapeutic appropriateness, dose, allergies, duplicate therapy and interactions prior to administration to the patient. Wardstock medications can place patients at risk as their use bypasses the Pharmacy review process.

When considering medications to be stocked as wardstock in patient care areas, the following will be taken into consideration:

1. Urgency—Medications required in emergency or STAT situations.
2. Frequency of use—medications with low risk of toxicity and used on a high frequency.
3. Special equipment needs—Medications requiring frequent monitoring or specialty equipment will only be considered for areas where the equipment and expertise are available.
4. Risk of Medication Errors or Near Misses
  - medications with a significant risk of toxicity and not needed in urgent situations will not be considered.
  - item should not look-alike or sound-alike to another product stocked in the area.
  - available strengths of a particular dosage form will be minimized—ideally one strength per item per unit.
5. Storage requirements for stability.
6. Cost of the item requested.

### MEDICATION STASHES

The risks of stashing or accessing/borrowing and administering medications before orders undergo Pharmacy review negates the consideration taken when restricting a medication from wardstock.

- Safety checks that are normally in place before the drug reaches the patient will be missed.
- Stashed medications may expire while being stored on the unit.
- If a medication is needed immediately and is not available as wardstock, call the pharmacy to prioritize the order. If it is after hours, confirm the immediate need of starting the dose, check the night cupboard, then call the on-call pharmacist if necessary.

### MEDICATION SECURITY

Anyone involved in procuring, prescribing, dispensing, or administering medication is responsible for safely securing medications in his/her area:

- Medication carts must be locked when not in use. Medication storage rooms must not be accessible by patients/visitors. No medications are to be left on medication carts or countertops.
- Only remove medications from storage when needed.
- Narcotics and controlled substances must be locked at all times.
- Medications are to remain in their packaging until just before administration.
- Medication refrigerators are to be kept at a temperature between 2 and 8 °C and all other items (food, swabs, and lab samples) must be stored elsewhere.