



Medication Management Standards Newsletter

- Accreditation Canada Survey will take place September 19–23, 2016
- In this issue, we focus on Verbal and Telephone Orders

- 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.

TELEPHONE and VERBAL ORDERS

Verbal and telephone orders have a higher **potential for errors** as these orders can be misheard, misinterpreted and/or mis-transcribed.

Safety is the overriding principle when accepting verbal or telephone orders.

Safe Practice Tips

- Only accept these orders when it is impossible or impractical for the authorized prescriber to write them. Do not accept verbal orders when the prescriber is present and the chart is available.
- Use **generic** drug names and **avoid abbreviations** to avoid misinterpretation,
- Prescriber must state the orders clearly
- Receiver must read back the order to the prescriber including:
 - Patient name
 - Drug name and spelling of the drug
 - Dosage, pronouncing it in single digits (15 mg should be read as one five)
 - Route
 - Frequency (eg three times a day, not TID)
 - Duration, if applicable
- Ask yourself: Does the verbal order make sense in the context of the patient's condition?
- Record the order directly in the patient's chart. If it is transcribed from a scrap of paper, another opportunity for error is introduced.
- Read the order back to the prescriber again after the order is written in the chart.

- Prescriber must review and countersign the order as specified in the VCH Medical Staff Rules.

Orders for Chemotherapy Agents

- Orders for chemotherapy agents (including those used for non-oncological indications) must be written directly by the prescriber (exception: orders to hold or discontinue).
- To facilitate chemotherapy preparation, changes to a previously-written or previously-entered orders may be made by a pharmacist upon verbal or telephone order from a prescriber.

The dose must not be administered until the new order has been signed and dated by a prescriber. If the prescriber is not available to sign, a new faxed order should be provided by the prescriber reflecting the dose changes.

Who can accept telephone or verbal orders?

- Pharmacists – for all medications except chemotherapy
- RN's – for all medications except chemotherapy and intrathecal medications
- LPN's may only accept orders for assigned stable patients in designated patient care units for medications via all routes except intravenous and intrathecal.
- Respiratory therapists may only accept orders for medications which they are approved to administer.