

## After Hours – Urgent Administration Medication Packages

### Objective

To provide the physician with a selection of medications in packages which the physician can issue to the patient in order to meet the immediate medication needs of the patient until conventional pharmacy services are available.

Such systems represent a physical extension of a pharmacist's dispensary. As a result, security is a paramount consideration.

### Basic Features and Procedures

1. The pharmacist stocks a limited number of medication packages (i.e. contain a sufficient quantity of medication for the patient to access pharmacy services) in a locked storage area accessible only by the pharmacist and physician.

The packages contain medications that are commonly prescribed in emergency out-patient or clinic situations (i.e. antimicrobials agents and pain medication).

2. Medication packages are issued by the doctor to his patients in emergency situations when the services of a pharmacist are not readily available (i.e. after regular business hours of the pharmacy).
3. The physician writes a prescription to cover the medication package(s) issued and leaves the prescription with the locked storage area.
4. The pharmacy arranges to collect the prescriptions and replenish the stock of medication packages on a regular basis.

### Model

1. Pharmacist, in consultation with the physician, documents the medication packages to be stocked. The list should include:
  - name and strength of medication
  - number of packages to be stocked
  - special conditions (i.e. storage)
  - quantity per package
  - dosage form
  - directions

2. The pharmacist pre-types and affixes pharmacy prescription labels to the packages.

The labels should contain the following information:

- name and strength of medication
- lot number
- quantity
- directions
- expiry date
- the statement: **“This may not be a full course of treatment. Please contact the pharmacy.”**

3. The pharmacist affixes appropriate auxiliary labels to the packages (i.e. shake well, refrigerate, etc.)
4. The pharmacist pre-packages diluents for medications which require reconstitution. The diluent package should be labelled as follows:
  - content and quantity
  - purpose and final product (i.e. \_\_\_\_\_ ml distilled water for reconstituting \_\_\_\_\_ powder to make \_\_\_\_\_ ml of \_\_\_\_\_ suspension \_\_\_\_\_ mg per 5 ml)
5. The packages are stocked in an appropriate secure place.
6. Only a physician, nurse and the pharmacist have access to the stocks of packages.
7. When requiring medication for a patient, the physician writes a prescription. The physician issues the appropriate package to the patient by writing the date and patient's name on the prescription label, and performs other functions required for delivery of a final product (i.e. reconstitutes liquid antibiotics).
8. The prescriptions are left in the locked storage area. The pharmacist collects and retains the prescriptions for his records. The pharmacist replenishes the packages as represented by the prescriptions.
9. The pharmacist is responsible for his record-keeping (i.e. patient profiles, billing and third party billing).
10. The system should be periodically (at least annually) evaluated.

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