

Errata

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Unit: HLTHPS007 Administer and monitor medication

Resource: Learner Guide

Update: Version 1.4 updated to Version 1.5

Affected pages: 8, 120-121

Use the attached pages to update the affected document.

Abbreviation	Meaning
ec	enteric-coated
elix	elixir
fl	fluid
gtt	drop
h.s.	at hour of sleep (bedtime)
inj or IJ	injection
L	litre
mane	morning
ml	millilitres
nocte	night
p.c.	after meals
p.o.	by mouth
PR	per rectum
q	every – for example, q8h means every 8 hours
q.a.m	every morning
q.d.	every day
q.i.d.	four times/day
q.o.d.	every other day
q.p.m	each evening
subling or SL	sublingual (under the tongue)
supp	suppository
t.i.d. or tds	three times/day
tab	tablet
tblsp	tablespoon
tsp	teaspoon
ċ	with
š	without

Medication administration errors

Errors will occur in all workplaces and with all tasks, including administering medications to clients. It is imperative that workers aim to minimise any medication administration errors and, more importantly, that they can quickly identify and report the occurrence of any administration errors.

The principles of safe medication administration are often called five rights (5Rs) – give the right drug via the right route in the right dose to the right patient at the right time. Some organisations also use the nine rights. These are similar to the five rights, but they also include the right of the person to refuse their medications, the right of the person to know what the drug they are taking is for, the right to documentation being used and updated as required, and the right to having a drug prepared in the correct way.

4B Administer medications correctly according to defined legislation, organisational procedures, professional standards and instructions

Medication assists in the treatment and prevention of disease, increases life expectancy and improves the quality of life for people; however, medicines do have the potential to cause harm if they are not administered according to the care plan, medication administration records, delegation instructions and the five rights (5Rs), which are listed below with the addition of another four rights.

The 'rights'	Explanation
The right person	Check that you are assisting the right person by looking at the photo by the DAA; you can also confirm their name by asking them or by looking at their identification bracelet.
The right medication	Check that you are assisting with the correct medication. Read the labels on bottles, and ensure that the name of the medication matches that on the order.
The right time	Check that the medication is being administered at the correct time. The time will be clearly written on the medication chart and DAA. Some medications have side effects like sleepiness or dizziness, which means they may only be given at night. Other medications must be taken before or with food. When a person is self-administering, they may need to be reminded and prompted. Encourage them to develop a routine and to use lists
The right route	<p>Check that the medication is being administered via the correct route; for example, orally (via the mouth), sublingually (under the tongue), nasally (into the nose), ocularly (into the eyes), topically (onto the skin), rectally (into the anus), vaginally (into the vagina).</p> <p>The medication chart or label will explain how the medication is to be administered.</p> <p>Sometimes, the instructions will be in an abbreviated form that your supervisor may need to explain to you.</p>
The right dose	<p>Where there is a dosage documented (e.g., for powders, inhalants, creams, etc.), check that you are assisting with the correct dosage.</p> <p>Drugs will only be effective if the correct dosage is given. If, for some reason, you find it hard to read the medication chart, do not proceed. Contact your supervisor, the doctor or the pharmacist.</p> <p>If you are helping to pour a liquid, use a measuring cup with clear indications on the sides, and measure the dose in millilitres (unless an alternative measurement is specified).</p>

The additional 4 rights are listed below:

The right of the client to refuse	The client/patient has the right to say they do not want to take their medications. This is their right, but you must document it and notify your supervisor/the nurse in charge as per the policy and procedures related to assisting with medications.
The right of the client/patient to know what the drug is for	The client/patient has the right to understand what they are being given. If you do not know what is being administered, tell them you will find out from your supervisor/the nurse in charge. Otherwise, have somebody more knowledgeable come and explain.
The right documentation	You must document that you have assisted with medication on the medication administration record/chart, and (as per policies and procedures) on the support/support plan and/or progress notes.
The right drug preparation	You must be sure that the medication is administered after being prepared the correct way. For instance, some pills have an enteric coating on them that ensures a slow release of the drug. These cannot be crushed or cut.

Administer medication in accordance with prescriber form and instructions

Prescribed and over-the-counter medications are supplied with prescription instructions, which relate to dosage and frequency. They will also advise which administration route to use; orally, via the rectum, intravenously, topically etc.

You have a duty of care to follow instructions exactly as they are worded. Not following prescriber form and instructions puts the person at risk of harm; for example, the dosage may be too high, or there may be a build-up of toxicity.

Administer medication in accordance with legislation, organisational procedures and professional standards

Your organisation's medication management policy and procedures will detail how to administer medication correctly. It is important to follow these principles and instructions, as they are based on legal requirements.

Legally, you have a responsibility to provide duty of care to people you support, which includes managing and administering medication correctly. Relevant legislation includes aged care services, disability services, drugs and poisons and negligence legislation.

Professional standards are provided for all community services settings. By following organisational procedures, you inherently follow standards, such as the Aged Care Quality Standards. You have an obligation to both your organisation and the people you support to follow instructions exactly.