



**POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL  
PHARMACY SERVICES**

SECTION: **DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACY SERVICES**

SUBJECT: **MEDICATION STORAGE**

CODE: 1.46.0

DATE: 1/25/88

REVISED: 7/6/2017, 8/2/2017, 4/19/22

APPROVED: Thinh Tran, Pharm. D.

MEC APPROVED: 12/16/09, 2/24/10, 4/28/10, 3/23/11  
7/25/12.

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POLICY

To ensure proper and safe storage of medications on patient units/areas, the following rules should be adhered to:

A. Medication Storage

1. Medication storage and preparation centers shall be functional and provide for:
  - a. Adequate space to allow container labels to be clearly visible.
  - b. Adequate lighting so that labels can be clearly read.
  - c. Adequate ventilation.
  - d. Adequate work space with minimal traffic and noise.
  - e. Sufficient equipment and supplies in readily usable form.
  - f. Refrigeration.
  - g. Pharmacist only access locked Narcotic cabinet
  - h. Adequate means for security and storage of medications in the PYXIS MedStation (Automated Medication Dispensing System), medication carts, medication refrigerators, and other locations.
2. The following will be stored separately from internals, injectables, and topicals:
  - a. Test reagents.
  - b. General disinfectants and antiseptics.
  - c. Cleansing agents.
3. Multi-dose vials (MDV) - injectable liquids in vials containing preservatives, which allow for multiple needle entry, may be used for 28-days after needle puncture of the vial diaphragm or stopper.\* However, the vial would be discarded if the integrity of the product is questionable, e.g. improperly seated stopper or turbid liquid which should be clear. Refer to Policy and Procedure 1.45.0 (Expiration Dates)
4. Opened or needle-punctured single-dose vials of medications are to be used within one hour. Refer to Policy and Procedure 1.45.0 (Expiration Dates)
5. Irrigation solutions (Normal Saline, Sterile Water and Acetic Acid) used for patient care will be discarded after use, as per manufacture recommendation.

Reviewed: 10/1/15bj, 4/4/16bj, 4/19/22 TT

Approved By: *Ben Arns*



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**B. Narcotics and DEA Controlled Substances**

1. Medication carts, refrigerators, cabinets and compartments with narcotics must be kept locked and the keys available only to the nurse in charge or an alternate.

Privilege to access and inventory medications in the PYXIS Automated Medication Dispensing System and the medication refrigerator is granted to a limited number of licensed staff permanently assigned to each of the in-patient units. Temporary privileges for a limited number of hours can be granted to float staff.

2. Schedule II, III, IV, V medications shall be inventoried, recorded, and inspected as per the State Board of Pharmacy regulations.
3. If Schedule II, III, IV, or V medications are lost or stolen:
  - a. Report to the immediate supervisor. Submit a Safety Intelligence report.
  - b. File a police report. Obtain the report number and the investigating officer's name and phone number.
  - c. Report significant loss or theft to the DEA within one business day.
    - (1). Provide initial notification of the loss/theft in writing to the DEA Los Angeles Division Office by fax.

**LOS ANGELES DIVISION OFFICE**

255 East Temple St.

17th Floor

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: (888) 415-9822

Fax: (503) 721-6602

- (2). Complete the DEA Form 106 online ([Chemical and Drug Theft/Loss Reporting \(usdoj.gov\)](http://www.usdoj.gov)).
- d. Submit copy of DEA Form 106 to the Board of Pharmacy within 14 days by fax or email.

California Board of Pharmacy

2720 Gateway Oaks Drive

Suite 100

Sacramento, CA 95833

Fax: (916) 574-8614

Email: [DEA106@dca.ca.gov](mailto:DEA106@dca.ca.gov)

**C. Investigational Drugs**



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All investigational drugs in use are properly stored, distributed and controlled according to investigator's protocol

**D. Inspections**

1. Medications:

- a. Medication carts, cabinets, refrigerators, PYXIS and other locations, shall be examined monthly by Nurse Manager or designated registered nurse during environmental rounds.
- b. Monthly inspections shall be made by the Chief Pharmacist and Director of Nursing, or their designees, namely a pharmacist and a registered nurse. A record of all monthly inspections is maintained in the pharmacy.
- c. Medications will be safely stored under proper conditions (e.g., temperature, humidity, protection from light, and security).
- d. Deteriorated, expired medications, improperly stored medications, or overstocked medications shall be returned to the pharmacy. Patients who may have received an unusable medication will be identified, notified, and evaluated for potential untoward outcome.
- e. Nursing will assure that all discontinued medications are placed in the pharmacy return bin and/or returned to the pharmacy as soon as possible.

**E. Storage Conditions**

1. Security

- a. Only authorized hospital personnel will have access to the PYXIS MedStation, medication refrigerators, medication carts, cabinets and other medication locations. These personnel include Unit R.N., L.V.N.; Pharmacists; Pharmacy Technicians; and Respiratory Therapists. Environmental Services, Supply Chain Services, Facilities, and other non-licensed personnel are also given supervised access to secured areas for the performance of their assigned work duties.

2. Storage Temperature

- a. Specific directions are stated in some monographs with respect to the temperatures at which pharmacopoeia articles shall be stored. Such directions apply except where the label of an article states a different storage temperature on the basis of stability studies.

The conditions are defined by the following terms:

- (1) Cold-Any temperature not exceeding 8°C (46°F). A refrigerator is a cold place in which the temperature is maintained thermostatically between 2°C to 8°C (35°F to 46°F). A freezer is a cold place in which the temperature is not to exceed -25°C to -10°C (-13°F to 14°F).



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- (2) Room Temperature - The temperature prevailing in a work area. Controlled room temperature is a temperature maintained thermostatically between 15°C and 30°C (59°F and 86°F).
    - (3) Protection from Freezing - Where in addition to the risk of breakage of the container, freezing subjects a product to loss of strength or potency, or to destructive alteration of the dosage form. Container labels bear appropriate instructions to protect the product from freezing.
  3. Storage equipment (e.g. refrigerators, thermometers, carts, and cabinets) will be maintained in accordance with standards of practice and/or manufacturer recommendations to ensure proper functioning..
  4. Temperatures will be monitored and recorded twice a day for refrigerators storing vaccines. For areas that are not 24/7, refrigerators storing medications other than vaccines will have digital monitors with memory and high and low parameters. When the area is closed, weekends and holidays, the refrigerator temperature parameter will be monitored and recorded when the area reopens. Facilities and Pharmacy should be immediately notified if medication storage equipment exceeds its parameters. Pharmacy will determine the disposition of the medications.
  5. Storage of flammables and combustibles is in accordance with State and Local laws. Flammables are stored in a room, vault, cabinet, or container specifically designed for such storage. Combustible materials are not stored with flammables. Flammables and combustibles are not stored so close to a source of heat, sparks, flame as to constitute a hazard. Products that may react with one another must be kept separated. All flammable liquids are labeled by manufacturer, e.g., ethyl chloride, liquefied phenol, benzoin compound tincture, tincture of benzoin.