

# LOS ANGELES GENERAL MEDICAL CENTER POLICY

Subject: <b>MEDICATION USAGE</b>	Original Issue Date: 7/01/74	Policy # <b>900</b>
	Supersedes: 3/14/17	Effective Date: 05/08/23
Policy Owner(s): Director of Pharmacy Services Executive Sponsor(s): Chief Medical Director		
Departments Consulted: Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee	Reviewed & Approved by: Attending Staff Association Executive Committee Senior Executive Officer	Approved by: Chief Medical Officer
		Chief Executive Officer

## PURPOSE

To provide safe and effective medication use for the patients of the Los Angeles General Medical Center. To ensure compliance with regulatory guidelines for drug and pharmaceutical administrative controls.

## POLICY

The drug formulary and the medication use policies for the care and treatment of Los Angeles General Medical Center patients shall be approved by the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee in accordance with the Attending Staff Association Bylaws.

## PROCEDURE

### Drug Formulary

- The Los Angeles General Medical Center Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Committee is comprised of physicians, pharmacists, nurses, and administrator representing the facilities and programs within the Medical Center.
- The P&T Committee renders guidelines, restrictions, policies, and decisions pertaining to medications at all facilities, programs, and services in the Medical Center.
- The P&T Committee will review requests to modify the formulary submitted by physicians and co-signed by the respective Medical Department's Chair. Medications are assessed based on need, efficacy, risk, and cost. Decisions are forwarded to the Department of Health Services (DHS) Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee for final review.
- Medications listed in the formulary are either:
  - General formulary items available for routine use
  - Restricted Drug – prescribing will be limited in scope to either a particular medical service or disease state.
- Facilities and programs throughout the Los Angeles County Health System provide representation to the DHS Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committee. Through a collaborative effort and with input from medical experts, this committee will review data submitted from the various facilities to develop a formulary that meets the clinical needs of patients throughout Los Angeles County. This compilation of data and effort results in the DHS Formulary.

- The DHS Formulary is the exclusive formulary for all Los Angeles County – Department of Health Services facilities.
- Non-formulary medications may be prescribed to individual patients when pharmacologic and/or therapeutic considerations so dictate. Orders for dispensing pharmacy-supplied non-formulary drugs require the approval of the P&T Chairperson, the Medical Officer of the Day (MOD), the Chief of Pharmacy Services or DHS clinical pharmacists. If the non-formulary drug that is ordered is a home medication brought to the hospital, the pharmacy may dispense it without prior approval. However, if the home supply runs out, the order will be considered canceled. Any new order for that medication will then require approval as above.
- All Investigational Drugs require the approval of the Investigation Research Board (IRB).
- For policies and regulations regarding controlled substances, please refer to the California Board of Pharmacy Website at <http://www.pharmacy.ca.gov/>
- For information on specific medication policies (ex. Automatic Stop Orders), please refer to the Pharmacy Policy and Procedure Manual and the Nursing Policy Manual (i.e. Medication Policies [900-932]).

### **Medication Safety**

- All healthcare professionals are encouraged to provide information to improve medication safety. Information can be provided through PSN (Patient Safety Net / Safety Intelligence) for Adverse Drug Reactions or Medication Events. These reports are reviewed and reported to the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee. This information is used to evaluate medications that are available on the formulary.
- The use of any abbreviation is discouraged when writing prescriptions. Since abbreviations are a well- documented source of medication errors, the Medical Center implemented a list of unsafe (unapproved) abbreviations that are prohibited from being used. (See Medical Center Policy 412, Health/Medical Records: Use of Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Symbols and its attachment, Medical Center Prohibited/Unsafe Abbreviations List). An example of how an abbreviation can result in a medication error is the use of the letter “U” for units. The letter “U” can be misinterpreted as a zero, resulting in a ten-fold increase in dose. Prescribers must spell out the word “units” to avoid confusion.
- Today’s literature contains many examples of medication errors due to sound-alike and look-alike drug names. Prescribers are encouraged to write legibly and speak clearly. To facilitate awareness and increase patient safety, the Medical Center maintains and communicates a list of Look-Alike and Sound Alike Medications and safety strategies.
- For additional information on medication safety, healthcare professionals are encouraged to visit the Institute of Safe Medication Practices' website at [www.ismp.org](http://www.ismp.org).
- The following information is accessible to licensed independent practitioners and staff who participate in the management of the patient’s medications:
  - Age
  - Sex

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- Diagnoses
- Allergies
- Sensitivities
- Current medications
- Height and weight (when necessary)
- Pregnancy and lactation information (when necessary)
- Laboratory results (when necessary)

### **Prescriptions/Who May Prescribe**

- All drugs dispensed to both inpatients and outpatients must be dispensed by an order or prescription to be filled by the Pharmacy Department. This is accomplished by either written or electronic fashion.
  - **Inpatients:** Drugs are ordered on the electronic patient's chart by postgraduate and attending physicians.
  - Mid-level providers, under the supervision of a physician that are credentialed by the Los Angeles General Medical Center, have received privileges for furnishing orders, and functioning under a standardized procedure.
  - Medication orders should include the generic name of the drug.
  - In emergency situations, a verbal order may be accepted and recorded on the electronic health record.
    - Personnel taking the verbal order shall document the order and then read it back verbatim to the physician who initiated it.
    - The practitioner should then verbally confirm that the order is correct or clarify any inaccuracies
    - Verbal orders must be dated, timed and signed by the physician as soon as possible, and in all cases, within 24 hours.
- **Outpatients:** All prescriptions must include the following information:
  - Patient's name and address
  - Date of issue
  - Drug name, strength, dosage form, route, quantity ordered, and directions for use
  - Patient's allergies
  - Prescriber's printed name, State license number, DEA number, SID number, and contact telephone number
  - Prescriber's signature

For outpatient prescriptions all prescribers are encouraged to include the patient's diagnosis/problem/complaint.

### **Medical Center Pharmacies**

- The inpatient pharmacies provide Unit-Dose Services, Intravenous Compounding Services, Parenteral Nutrition Services, Chemotherapy Preparation Services, and consultation services for the inpatients of the Los Angeles General Medical Center.

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- The main inpatient pharmacy for the Los Angeles General Medical Center is located in the D&T Building. This pharmacy is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The main telephone number is (323) 409-7641.
- Outpatient Pharmacies are located in the OPD and Clinic Towers buildings. These pharmacies provide prescription services and consultation services to our patients.
- The Clinic Tower Pharmacy is located in Room A1C109. This pharmacy is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The main telephone number is (323) 409-6763.
- The LOS ANGELES GENERAL Medical Center Outpatient Clinic Pharmacy is located in Room 2P82 of the OPD building. The pharmacy is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM, excluding holidays. The main telephone number is (323) 226-5091.
- The Pharmacy Administrative Offices are open Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, excluding holidays. The office telephone number is (323) 226-6021.
- For additional information regarding the pharmacies and their scope of services, please refer to the Los Angeles General Medical Center Pharmacy Policy and Procedure Manual.

### **PROCEDURE DOCUMENTATION**

Pharmacy Policy and Procedure Manual  
Los Angeles General Medical Center Drug Formulary  
Nursing Policy 942

### **REFERENCES**

Code of Federal Regulations, Title 21, Food and Drugs  
California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Sections 70261 and 70263  
California Business and Professions Code, Section 4040

### **REVISION DATES**

June 1, 1995; October 20, 1998; April 16, 2002, May 13, 2005; October 1, 2008; April 1, 2009;  
December 10, 2013; March 14, 2017; May 09, 2023