



# High Desert Health System POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY NUMBER: 665  
VERSION: 1

## SUBJECT: PHARMACEUTICALS (MEDICATION & VACCINE) ADMINISTRATION

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**PURPOSE:** To describe our procedure developed to ensure that administration of any pharmaceutical is performed with accuracy and according to the provider's intent.

**POLICY:** It is the duty of the provider to ensure that his/her intent in ordering the administration of a pharmaceutical is communicated clearly to the nurse executing his/her order.  
It is the duty of the nurse administering the pharmaceutical to ensure that she/he clearly understands the pharmaceutical order and administers it as ordered.

### PROCEDURE:

- I. All orders for administration of pharmaceuticals must be complete and, at a minimum contain the following:
  - a. Patient's name
  - b. Patient's medical record number
  - c. Date and time of order
  - d. The identity of the ordering provider
  - e. Name of the pharmaceutical/medication
  - f. Dosage
  - g. Route of administration
  - h. Time to be administered and/or frequency of administration (see #1)
  - i. "PRN" orders must include specific parameters or conditions that trigger the administration of the medication.
  
- II. Time to be administered and/or frequency of administration is defined as follows and, therefore, need not be included by the provider and is no required to consider the order "complete".
  - a. All orders for the administration of pharmaceuticals are one-time-only orders, to be executed only once, unless specifically stated otherwise.
  - b. All orders are to be executed at the nurse's first opportunity to do so, unless a specific time to execute the order is documented, or unless an order is to be executed "STAT".
  - c. If a medication is to be administered "STAT", it is the duty of the provider to document the order STAT, to identify a specific nurse to execute the order, to engage that nurse's attention verbally, and to call his/her attention to the

<b>POLICY NO:</b> 665	<b>SUBJECT:</b> PHARMACEUTICALS (MEDICATION & VACCINE) ADMINISTRATION	<b>Page 2 of 2</b>
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order and its STAT nature, at which time the nurse will execute the order immediately.

- III. When executing a “PRN” order, the nurse will document the evidence for meeting the criteria that trigger the administration of the medication.
  
- IV. When a provider orders the administration of any of the vaccines on the attached table, the dose and route of administration of the vaccine will be per the instructions on the table, unless specifically ordered otherwise by the provider. If the provider orders a vaccine with a dose or route of administration different than that published on the table, the nurse will return the order to the provider for clarification and verification, and the document their action before administering the vaccine with the dose or route not published on the table.
  
- V. Nursing personnel will return medication orders to the provider for clarification and/or re-write if:
  - a. The provider’s order is unclear
  - b. The provider’s order is incomplete, or
  - c. Whenever unapproved abbreviations are used.

Approved By: Beryl Brooks (ADMR,COMP AMB HEALTH CARE CENTER), Ruth Oren (CHIEF PHYSICIAN I ANESTHESIOLOGY), Susan Knapp (CHIEF NURSING OFFICER I)	
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