

Medication Administration by Nursing Students

According to the College of Nurse of Ontario (2017), the medication practice standard outlines the nurses' responsibilities around medication practices based on the 3 principles of authority, competence and safety.

The CNO Medication Practice Standard can be found here:

https://www.cno.org/globalassets/docs/prac/41007_medication.pdf

Nursing Students Must:

- Have the skill, judgement and knowledge (of indications, contraindications, dose, interactions, adverse effects, route and how to administer a drug safely) to assess the appropriateness of a medication for a particular patient
- Be aware of any medication allergies and sensitivities the patient may have.

Competent Medication Administration:

Please refer to SJHC's Medication Administration Standard of Care (SOC) attached for specific guidelines on the standards and timelines of medication administration that clinicians are responsible for.

Guidelines for Supporting Learners

To support the student's learning, an RN, RPN or Clinical Instructor (CI) will provide the necessary supervision to facilitate the learning experience in the calculation, preparation and administration of medications until the learner is competent to perform the task independently. Medications administered by a student nurse must be within their specific scope of practice and meet SJHC Standards of Care pertaining to medication administration and safety of medication orders. All medications must be documented immediately after administration. **Students are not permitted to verify medication transcribed from physician orders to the Medication Administration Record (MAR).** To enhance medication competency, students are encouraged to participate in the calculation, preparation and administration of high-risk medications under the supervision of the CI or primary nurse.

- **Group Placements:** CIs will use their discretion on the degree of supervision a student requires for low risk oral medications (e.g. acetaminophen, ibuprofen, lactulose, dimenhydrinate, etc.) based on their assessment of a student's competence and in consultation with the primary nurse.
- **Preceptored Placements:** As the student gains knowledge and displays increased competence with medication administration, it may be appropriate for the Preceptor, in consultation with the faculty liaison, to delegate more responsibility to the student.

Handling of Narcotics and Controlled Substances

Preparation and administration of narcotics by a student nurse must be directly supervised by the Clinical Instructor or by a nurse.

Wastage of Narcotics: Any wastage of narcotics must be explained, witnessed and co-signed by two registered nurses (RN). Students may not sign for waste.

Accessing Narcotics: Students and clinical instructors may not carry narcotic keys or access cards. When students are giving narcotics, the primary nurse assigned to the patient must accompany the student and CI to the narcotic cupboard to sign out the narcotic or controlled substance.