

HEALTH SERVICES POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

North Carolina Department Of public Safety
Prison

SECTION: Care and Treatment of Patient -
Medication Administration

POLICY # TX II-5

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SUBJECT: Starter Dose Program

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 2017

SUPERCEDES DATE: April 2012

References

Related ACA Standards

**4th Edition Standards for adult Correctional
Institutions 4-4378**

PURPOSE

The starter dose program provides short term quantities of medications for the timely initiation of therapy until the balance of the medication order can be secured from a Department of Public Safety DPS Prisons Pharmacy

POLICY

Offenders shall receive provider prescribed medications for the timely initiation of therapy.

PROCEDURE

A. Starter Dose Inventory

1. Selection of Starter Dose Drugs

- a. Starter dose drugs shall be selected from a standardized starter dose inventory list determined by Apex Central Pharmacy. The starter dose inventory list shall represent a variety of therapeutic categories.
- b. Controlled Substances shall be excluded from the Starter Dose Program per federal and state rules and regulations.
- c. A facility's final starter dose drug selections shall be coordinated with the facility providers and a DPS Prisons Pharmacy. The selection represents the facility's most commonly prescribed drugs deemed critical for immediate therapy.

2. Packaging and Labeling of Starter Dose Drugs

- a. A preprinted starter dose label ~~will~~ shall be attached to each starter dose container.
- b. Each starter dose shall be assigned a unique prescription number.
- c. Upon end product verification of the final starter dose drug product, pharmacists shall ensure the inclusion of all necessary information as required by state rules and regulations.

3. Storage of Starter Dose Drugs

- a. Each correctional facility shall store all starter dose drugs for medical and mental health treatment in the same location, preferably where the order processing takes place.
- b. Starter dose drugs for dental clinics shall be stored in the dental clinic.
- c. Starter dose drugs for intravenous administration shall be stored in the infirmary where administration takes place.
- d. The starter dose drug inventory shall be secured with key or combination lock to deny access to unauthorized persons.
- e. Storage for starter dose drugs is separate from other drug inventories, i.e., stock, emergency or non-prescription drugs.

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4. Quantity per Container of Starter Dose Drugs

- a. Starter dose drug quantity per container shall be limited to the short term therapy of four (4) days as permitted by the North Carolina Board of Pharmacy rules and regulations. Drug quantities per container are determined by calculating the most commonly prescribed dosing regimens for the drug. Inventory levels per drug shall be determined by the frequency of use at the facility.
- b. All unit of use items, i.e., inhalers, injectables, parenterals, which are issued as whole containers shall be exempt from the four (4) day quantity guideline.

B. Starter Dose Order Processing

1. Starter Dose Drugs shall be issued from the starter dose program by licensed medical staff upon the initiation of a providers' order identified as "Start Now".
2. The starter dose drug issuance shall be documented on the corresponding *Starter Dose Log Sheet* and the starter dose RX number entered into HERO. Each drug shall be recorded on a separate *Starter Dose Log Sheet* and shall be faxed to a DPS Pharmacy immediately when the starter is pulled.
3. Starter dose drugs may be obtained from a nearby facility if licensed medical staff is not available at their facility or they do not have a starter dose program. The facility that pulls the starter dose shall enter the starter dose RX number into HERO and be responsible for faxing the *Starter Dose Log Sheet* to a DPS Pharmacy.
4. Nursing staff shall complete the appropriate offender information on the starter dose label.
5. When a starter dose is required on a refill of a medication a new order must be obtained from a provider and entered into HERO as a "Start Now" order.

C. Starter Dose Replenishment by a DPS Prisons Pharmacy

1. A DPS Prisons Pharmacy shall replace the starter dose when the *Starter Dose Log Sheet* is faxed to a DPS Pharmacy.
2. The starter dose information is entered into the corresponding offender's profile to provide medication tracking.

D. Starter Dose Receipt and Accountability

1. Starter dose receipt and accountability consists of the following:
 - a. Facilities shall immediately enter the receipt of starter dose replacements on the corresponding *Starter Dose Log Sheet*. The inability to reach the starter par level is an indication to the facility that a discrepancy has occurred and needs to be resolved
 - b. Each facility shall complete a weekly *Starter Audit Form* by counting the actual quantity on hand and forwarding the *Starter Audit Form* to the pharmacy.
 - c. A DPS Prisons Pharmacist will review the *Starter Audit Form* for discrepancies.
 - d. If discrepancies are noted by a DPS Prisons Pharmacist, a *Starters On Grid* form shall be completed and faxed to the facility for processing.

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- e. The facility shall process the *Starters On Grid* form and fax the *Starter Dose Log Sheet* to the requesting pharmacy.
 - f. A DPS Prisons Pharmacy shall transfer and replace the starter associated with the discrepancy on the *Starter On Grid* form.
 - g. The facility shall use the oldest starter first in order to avoid having expired medications.
 - h. Expired starter doses shall be documented on the corresponding *Starter Dose Log Sheet* and returned to a DPS Prisons Pharmacy for replacement.
 - i. Unused tablets/capsules resulting from medication orders not requiring the full starter dose quantity shall be placed in a medication envelope labeled with the starter dose prescription number and the name of the medication and returned to a DPS Prisons Pharmacy for crediting.
2. A DPS Prisons Pharmacy representative shall conduct periodic review of the starter dose program.
 3. Facilities shall maintain starter dose packing slips for ninety (90) days and completed *Starter Dose Log Sheets* for three (3) years.



1/31/2017

Paula Y. Smith, MD, Chief of Health Services

Date

SOR: Director of Pharmacy