**Prohibited Abbreviations, Symbols and Dose Designations**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

**Why were these specific abbreviations, symbols and dose designations chosen?**

The list of prohibited abbreviations, symbols and dose designations found in the policy are recommendations from the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP), Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and the National Coordinating Council for Medication Error Reporting and Prevention (NCC MERP).

These abbreviations, symbols and dose designations have been reported as being frequently misinterpreted and involved in harmful medication errors and should **NEVER** be used when communicating medication information.

**Who supports this initiative?**

This is a Covenant Health wide patient safety initiative approved by the Medication Management Steering Committee and the Senior Leadership Team.

**To what sites does this apply?**

The list of prohibited abbreviations, symbols and dose designations applies to **ALL** Covenant Health sites.

**What areas of the chart must prohibited abbreviations, symbols and dose designations NOT use?**

The list of prohibited abbreviations, symbols and dose designations applies to all medication related documentation when hand written or entered as free text into a computer; pre-printed medication – use forms; and on any pharmacy generated labels or forms.

**Do pre-printed patient care order forms have to comply with the prohibited abbreviations, symbols and dose designations?**

Pre-printed patient care orders will be required to comply with the list of prohibited abbreviations, symbols and dose designations as they are updated and re-printed.

**Who will enforce this?**

Audits will occur on a regular basis. Results will be analyzed by the Medication Management Office and forwarded to the Accountable Leader(s) to develop targeted strategies for changes to communication and education to demonstrate compliance to the Prohibited Abbreviations, Symbols and Dose Designations Policy.

**What action will be taken against non-compliant prescribers?**

A regular auditing process will be used to support and guide prescribers to ensure compliance with the policy.

**Will medication continue to be dispensed if a prohibited abbreviation is used?**

Yes medications will be dispensed by pharmacy. Clarity of the medication order must be assured prior to dispensing any medication.

**Who can I talk with if I want to discuss this initiative?**

Contact the Medication Management Office at: [medication.management@covenanthealth.ca](mailto:medication.management@covenanthealth.ca)