

Medication Handling Policy

SAMPLE

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Medication Handling Risk Assessment Template 19

Medication Incident Register Template 19

Medication Administration Record (MAR) Template 19

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Purpose

The purpose of this Medication Handling Policy is to ensure that all medication-related activities undertaken by [Company Name] in disability and aged care settings are carried out safely, legally and consistently, in order to:

- Protect the health, safety and wellbeing of clients, workers and visitors.
- Comply with relevant work health and safety (WHS) legislation, medicines and poisons legislation, and professional standards.
- Minimise the risk of medication errors, adverse events, misuse, diversion and harm.
- Provide clear guidance to workers on their roles, responsibilities and limitations in relation to medication.

This policy forms part of [Company Name]'s WHS management system and should be read in conjunction with clinical governance, incident management and risk management procedures.

Scope

This policy applies to all medication handling activities undertaken by [Company Name], including but not limited to:

- Residential aged care and disability accommodation services.
- Community-based services, including in-home support and day programs.
- Respite services and short-term accommodation.

It applies to:

- All workers, including employees, contractors, agency staff, students and volunteers.
- All medications handled by workers, including prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, complementary and alternative medicines, and restricted substances as defined in relevant state/territory legislation.

This policy does not override the clinical judgement of registered health practitioners acting within their professional scope of practice, but it does set WHS and organisational requirements for safe systems of work.

Definitions

Key Terms

- **Medication:** Any substance or product used to diagnose, treat or prevent disease, or to modify physiological functions, including prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, vaccines, complementary medicines and nutritional supplements.
- **Medication handling:** Any activity involving the selection, procurement, storage, transport, preparation, administration, recording, disposal or monitoring of medication.

- **Administration of medication:** The act of giving a medication to a client by any route (e.g. oral, topical, inhaled, subcutaneous) and ensuring it is taken.
- **Assistance with self-administration:** Supporting a client to take their own medication, where the client retains control and responsibility, and the worker provides limited assistance within defined parameters.
- **Worker:** Any person who carries out work in any capacity for [Company Name], including employees, contractors, agency staff, students and volunteers.
- **Client:** Any person receiving services from [Company Name], including residents, participants and consumers.
- **PRN medication:** Medication that is prescribed to be taken “as needed” for a specific condition and within specified limits.
- **High-risk medication:** Medications that have a heightened risk of causing significant harm if used in error (e.g. insulin, anticoagulants, opioids, psychotropic medications).
- **Schedule 8 (S8) medicines:** Controlled drugs subject to additional legal controls due to their potential for dependence, misuse and diversion.

Legislative and standards Framework

[Company Name] will ensure that medication handling practices align with, and are regularly reviewed against, current legislation, standards and guidelines, including (as applicable in each jurisdiction):

- Work health and safety legislation (e.g. Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations).
- Medicines, poisons and therapeutic goods legislation and regulations.
- Aged care quality and safety standards.
- Disability standards and NDIS Practice Standards.
- Professional standards and guidelines issued by relevant health practitioner boards.

[Company Name] will monitor changes to legislation and standards and update this policy, procedures and training accordingly.

Roles and Responsibilities

Officers and Senior Management

Officers and senior management of [Company Name] must exercise due diligence to ensure that the organisation meets its WHS duties in relation to medication handling by:

- Providing adequate resources for safe medication systems, including staffing, training, equipment and secure storage.
- Ensuring that hazards and risks associated with medication handling are identified, assessed and controlled.