



# MEDICATION USE MANUAL

Safe Medication Writing Guidelines..... No. HR.2  
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1. Medication orders must be legible and include a method for contacting the prescriber for questions or problems.
  - Orders must be written in black ink.
  - Felt tip pens will not be used.
  - All clinical entries in the patient’s medical record should be accurately timed, dated and authenticated. (Medical Staff Bylaws and Rules and Regulations-Medical Records #9)
  - After written, medication orders will not be altered.
  - If a correction needs to be made, one line should be neatly drawn through the error, leaving the incorrect material legible, and then it should be initialed and dated so it will be obvious that it was a corrected mistake.
  
2. Selected patient information shall be included on the physician order.
  - Allergies shall be noted on the admission orders.
  - Newly identified allergies shall be noted on the physician order.
  - When dosage is based upon weight, patient’s weight or estimated weight and dose per kilogram should be included on the order.
  
3. Safe medication writing guidelines should be utilized.
  - When changing the dose of a medication, the previous dose of medication should be discontinued.
  - A zero should be used before a decimal point. Example, write 0.1 instead of .1.
  - A zero should not be used after a decimal point. Example, write 1 instead of 1.0.
  
4. The following abbreviations identified as confusing shall not be used: See list as follows (next page):



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### *Abbreviations That Should Not Be Used*

<b>Abbreviation/ Dose Expression</b>	<b>Intended Meaning</b>	<b>Misinterpretation</b>	<b>Correction</b>
MgSO <sub>4</sub>	magnesium sulfate	morphine sulfate	Use the complete spelling for drug names.
MSO <sub>4</sub>	morphine sulfate	magnesium sulfate	
MS	morphine sulfate	magnesium sulfate	
q.o.d. or QOD	every other day	Misinterpreted as “q.d.” (daily) or “q.i.d. (four times daily) if the “o” is poorly written.	Use “every other day.”
Q.D.	daily	May be mistaken for QOD	Use “daily”
U or u	unit	Read as a zero (0) or a four (4), causing a 10-fold overdose or greater (4U seen as “40” or 4u seen as 44”).	“Unit” has no acceptable abbreviation. Use “unit.”
IU	international unit	Misread as IV (intravenous).	Use “units.”
ug	(Microgram)	Mistaken as mg (milligram)	Use mcg
Trailing Zero Zero after decimal point (1.0)	1 mg	Misread as 10 mg if the decimal point is not seen.	Do not use terminal zeros for doses expressed in whole numbers.
Lack of Leading Zero No zero before decimal dose (.5 mg)	0.5 mg	Misread as 5 mg.	Always use zero before a decimal when the dose is less than a whole unit.

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