

DEPARTMENT: Pharmacy

POLICY: PS-270

SUBJECT: Storage: General

PURPOSE: Drugs and devices shall be stored to ensure their integrity, stability, and effectiveness.

RESPONSIBILITY: Pharmacy, Nursing

POLICY:

1) DRUG STORAGE AREAS

- a. Drug dispensing, administration, and storage areas shall be well lit, neat, organized, and located where personnel preparing drugs for dispensing or administration will not be interrupted.

2) STORAGE CONDITIONS

- a. Drugs shall be stored under the proper conditions of sanitation, temperature, light, moisture, ventilation, organization, segregation, safety, and security. Temperatures and ventilation in the work areas shall ensure the integrity of drugs and the comfort of personnel.

3) AUTOMATED DISPENSING MACHINES/REFRIGERATION/FREEZER STORAGE

- a. All automated dispensing machines, refrigerators, and freezers that store medications will be plugged into emergency power outlets to ensure medication availability and proper storage conditions in the event of a power failure.

PROCEDURE:

1) USP/NF AND MANUFACTURERS' RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Drugs shall be stored according to the provisions of the USP/NF and/or the specifications of the manufacturer so that their integrity, stability, and effectiveness are maintained.
- b. When in conflict, the Director of Pharmacy shall ascertain whether the provisions of the USP/NF or the specifications of the manufacturer take precedence.

2) RESPIRATORY CARE DRUGS AND DRUGS USED TO PREPARE IRRIGATION SOLUTIONS

- a. Vials and ampules of respiratory care drugs and drugs used to prepare irrigation solutions shall be stored separately in the pharmacy from injectable drugs in order to minimize the possibility of accidental injection.

3) CONCENTRATED ELECTROLYTE INJECTIONS

- a. Concentrated electrolytes, including potassium chloride (KCl) injection, potassium phosphate injection, and sodium chloride greater than 0.9% shall be stored only in the pharmacy.

4) SPECIAL STORAGE CONDITIONS

- a. Drugs requiring special storage conditions for stability (e.g., refrigeration or freezing) shall be so stored. If required, drugs shall be protected from freezing, moisture, light, and excessive heat.

5) ORDERLY STORAGE

- a. Drugs shall be stored in an orderly manner to facilitate inventory control and minimize errors.

6) CLEAN STORAGE

- a. Storage areas shall be kept clean, uncluttered and free from trash, insects, rodents, and vermin.

7) SAFE STORAGE

- a. Hazardous and caustic materials shall be stored on in protective cabinets or boxes, or in another manner that will minimize the risk of breakage, spillage, and exposure of personnel.
- b. Heavy items shall be stored on lower shelves. Shelves shall not be overloaded.
- c. Drugs and supplies shall not be stored on the floor.
- d. Storage shall not obstruct the proper functioning or testing of any fire detecting or extinguishing system installed or suspended from the ceiling. A clearance of 36 inches is recommended, but may be reduced to 18 inches where flammable gases or liquids are not involved.
- e. Storage shall not prevent ready access to exits, fire extinguishing units, or tools.
- f. Corridors, passageways and other traffic areas shall be kept free of obstacles.