

The ordering of medicines by wards and clinical areas in hospitals



Purpose of this procedure:

The charge nurse, the responsible pharmacist or pharmacy technician, and the porters' manager must agree a schedule for ordering and delivery of medicines. Medicines included in the stock list must be ordered so that they may be delivered according to the schedule. Ward staff must arrange delivery for items that are ordered outwith the delivery schedule.

The Procedure:

- 1.0 The charge nurse must ensure that medicines are only ordered by registered nursing staff or other registered professionals that have been authorised. The charge nurse can delegate the ordering of medicines using a pharmacy agreed stock list (top-up) to an appropriately trained non-registered healthcare support worker. Each order must be reviewed, approved and countersigned by the nurse in charge. All authorised staff must be trained and competent in medicines governance and the processes involved in ordering medicines.
- 2.0 The site lead pharmacist is responsible for ensuring a process is in place for the training and competency assessment of pharmacy staff. Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians can order medicines. Appropriately trained non-registered pharmacy support workers can order medicines but all orders must be reviewed, approved and countersigned by a registered pharmacy or nursing professional.
- 3.0 The equivalent clinical manager or senior healthcare professional, e.g. radiographers, is the responsible person in areas where there is no charge nurse.
- 4.0 Staff who order medicines must make all the checks that are needed to ensure that required medicines are ordered, and that unnecessary medicines are not ordered.
- 5.0 Patients should use their own medicines during the hospital stay where they are suitable, and where the patient consents to do so. Refer to the Safe Use of Medicines Procedure, *The use of patients' own medicines in NHS Lothian premises including hospitals*.
- 6.0 Medicines must be ordered from the pharmacy on approved ordering documents. These documents are controlled stationary and should be stored in a locked drawer or cupboard with access restricted to authorised staff.
- 7.0 All required information must be written clearly on the ordering document.
- 8.0 The charge nurse must monitor medicines ordering practice for potential diversion of stock, to ensure that ordering is carried out efficiently, so that doses are not missed or delayed unnecessarily, medicines are not wasted, and medical, nursing, pharmacy and portering time is used efficiently.

- 9.0 If a medicine is not available, this must be recorded clearly on the medicine administration and prescription record as a missed dose, documented in the patient's medical record, and the responsible prescriber informed.
- 10.0 For responsibilities in relation to controlled drugs, refer to the Safe Use of Medicines Procedure for '*Controlled Drugs*'. [Controlled Drugs Procedures \(nhsllothian.scot\)](https://www.nhsllothian.scot)

Associated materials/references:

[The Safe Use of Medicines Policy](#)

[Controlled Drugs Procedures \(nhsllothian.scot\)](https://www.nhsllothian.scot)

[The use of patients' own medicines in NHS Lothian premises including hospitals](#)

[Medicine stock lists for wards and clinical areas in hospitals](#)

Documents currently in development (see current version at [NHS Lothian Safe Use of Medicines Policy \(scot.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhsllothian.scot.nhs.uk)):

The receipt of medicines on wards and clinical areas in hospitals

The supply of medicines in hospitals when the pharmacy department is closed

Borrowing of medicines in hospitals