



MASSEY UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

Administration of Medications

Because medication administration is an area of nursing that can be quite confusing in terms of what students can and can't do, it has been separated out to give it extra attention. To reduce the risk of medication mistakes it is important that students get to know the agency's Medication Policy as well as day-to-day routines. Please assist the students with this as it increases safety in the practice setting. The following bullet points summarise the main aspects of medication administration but please be aware that there are different levels of expectation between the DHBs utilised by MU. It is therefore impossible to provide one rule to cover all clinical areas. Please use common sense and err on the safe side when you are not sure what to do; seek advice.

- Year One students should not administer any medication unless they are directly supervised by the CTA. (In exceptional circumstances the CTA may give the student permission to administer specific medication under the supervision of a Registered Nurse.);
- Year Two and Year Three students are allowed to give medication orally and rectally, via intramuscular or subcutaneous injection. However, they must do so under the direct supervision of the Registered Nurse;
- Students are expected to know the correct dosage, action, administration precautions and side effects of any drug that they administer under supervision and they should be aware of patients that have known allergies prior to the administration of any medication;
- All care associated with Intravenous Infusions and medications, including putting up of fluids, setting and adjusting the rate of infusions, and checking and administering IV medications directly or indirectly via infusion are the responsibility of the registered nurse, and at the time of writing this document, students were not allowed to be involved with this level of medication administration. However, Yr Two and Yr Three students placed at CCDHB and HCDHB are in certain circumstances allowed to be involved with IV medications/infusions.
- CTAs and students are responsible for the observation of intravenous or related therapy of clients for whom they are caring and report (and document) to the agency staff any changes that may occur in the clients' condition. If the student believes that the infusion and/or its rate is injurious to the client's health they should report it immediately to the agency staff. Please note that students are not allowed to turn on, turn off, or alter the infusion pump settings, without being instructed and supervised by their Preceptor/RN;
- Students are not allowed to hold medication cupboard keys at any time;

- Medical staff must prescribe all medications to be administered and students need to check that the prescriber's instructions and signature are legible and clearly dated;
- Student nurses are not allowed to administer any vaccinations to children and young persons;

NB: Notwithstanding the above bullet points, as the Registered Nurse you, and only you, make the final decision whether a student is allowed to administer a certain drug. If you feel uncomfortable about a student administering medications then you should indicate this to the student and withhold your permission. However, we do ask you to discuss your concerns with the CTA so the issue can be dealt with appropriately.

Medication Errors

If students are involved in a medication administration error, e.g. incorrect drug or dosage, they need to follow the instruction in the order as presented below:

- Note the type of drug, the dosage and route, and the time when it was administered;
- Notify your Preceptor immediately. If this nurse is absent, notify the Nurse in Charge/Unit Manager;
- Notify the medical staff if instructed to do so by the registered staff;
- Take the client's baseline observations, which include Blood Pressure, Pulse, Temperature and Respiration Rate and record these on the Observation Recording Chart. Mark these recordings as "Baseline" and include the time that you took them;
- Notify your CTA/lecturer who will support/advise you;
- Complete the agency's incident form and other related documentation in the presence of your CTA/lecturer.