

3.5.18 Medication Shortages or Backorders

(a) Procedure Overview

California Correctional Health Care Services shall maintain a system to ensure that prescribers and other health care professionals are informed when prescribed medications cannot be provided in a timely manner because of inventory shortages, supply system shortages, or backorders. The system shall include a process to allow prescribers to change therapy when appropriate and to notify health care professionals and patients of the change.

(b) Purpose

To ensure that prescribers have the opportunity to assess the impact on patient therapy and adjust the care plan in a timely fashion when medications are unavailable due to supply system interruptions.

(c) Procedure

- (1) When it is determined that a prescribed medication is unavailable from the supplier because of an inventory shortage, manufacturer shortage, backorder, or other reasons, the Pharmacist-in-Charge, or pharmacist designee, shall assess the anticipated duration of delay.
- (2) The pharmacist shall communicate to the prescriber, or designee, and nursing staff when medication cannot be provided in the expected timeframe due to supply system interruptions.
 - (A) The communication shall include an anticipated timeframe for obtaining the medication.
 - (B) The prescriber shall determine the appropriate response and inform the pharmacist. The provider shall prescribe an alternative medication or authorize a delay in medication delivery if the timeframe is safe and appropriate. The prescriber shall document the decision to prescribe an alternative medication or authorize a delay in the health record.
 - (C) The pharmacist shall communicate the decision to nursing staff.
 - (D) Nursing staff shall communicate the decision to the patient.
- (3) The pharmacy shall keep a log of medications affected by the supplier interruption. Every business day, until the shortage resolves, the pharmacy shall reassess the availability of the prescribed medication and alternatives. A resolution for unavailable medications that are needed immediately or urgently shall be completed before the close of that business day.
- (4) If medication becomes unavailable from the manufacturer for an indeterminate period of time, the Pharmacist-In-Charge shall notify the prescribers, nurses, institution Medication Management Subcommittee, and headquarters Pharmacy Services at m_CCHCSRxSupplyChain@cder.ca.gov.
- (5) If the shortage is significant, the Statewide Chief of Pharmacy Services shall communicate the shortage to the Systemwide Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Committee.
 - (A) The Systemwide P&T Committee shall determine if an alternative product can be established as a therapeutic substitute for the unavailable item(s) pursuant to Health Care Department Operations Manual, Section 3.5.31, Therapeutic Interchange and Automatic Substitution.
 - (B) The recommendation for alternatives identified by the Systemwide P&T Committee shall be communicated to all facilities.
- (6) Once the shortage resolves, the pharmacists shall communicate the availability of the medication to the prescriber to make changes as appropriate.

References

- Health Care Department Operations Manual, Chapter 3, Article 5, Section 3.5.31, Therapeutic Interchange and Automatic Substitution

Revision History

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