

## FACULTY PRACTICE GROUP – Ambulatory Operations

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

**UCLA** Health System

**SECTION:** Clinical Operations

**SUBJECT:** Labeling of Medications/ Solutions for use in Ambulatory  
Clinical and Procedural Areas

REFERENCE #:

PAGE: 1 OF 2

### PURPOSE:

To reduce potentially fatal errors, resulting from medications and other solutions removed from their original containers and placed into unlabeled containers. All medications, medication containers (i.e. syringes, medicine cups, basins) or other solutions on and off the sterile field in perioperative and other procedural settings must be labeled.

### POLICY:

Labeling occurs when any medication or solution is transferred from the original packaging to another container. Always include the following:

- Name, strength, and dose of medication or solution
- Expiration date when not used within 24 hours and expiration time when expiration occurs in less than 24 hours
- Initials of the person preparing the medication

### DEFINITIONS:

- Medications include any prescription medications, sample medications, herbal remedies, vitamins, nutraceuticals, over the counter drugs, vaccines, diagnostic and contrast agents used on or administered to persons to diagnose, treat or prevent disease or other abnormal conditions; radioactive medications, respiratory therapy treatments, parenteral nutrition, blood derivatives, intravenous solutions (plain, with electrolytes and/or drugs), and any other product designated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as a drug.
- Solutions include chemicals and reagents such as formulin, saline, sterile water, Lugol's solution, radiopaque dyes, gluteraldehyde, Cidex OPA and chlorhexidine.
- Medications and solutions both on and off the sterile field or other procedural settings must be labeled even if there is only one medication being used.
- Labeling occurs when a medication or solution is transferred from the original packaged container to another container.
- If a medication/solution is drawn/poured from its original packaged container and immediately administered/used by the same person, the additional step of labeling is not required.
- When the person preparing the medication/solution is not the person administering/using the medication/solution all labels are verified both verbally and visually by two healthcare providers who understand the intended use of the medication/solution.
- No more than one medication or solution is labeled at one time.

- Medication/solution labels include the drug name, strength, and amount (if not apparent from the container) of the medication/solution.
- If the medication/solution will not be used within 24 hours the expiration date must be included on the label. If the medication/solution will expire in less than 24 hours the time and date of expiration must be included on the label.
- Commercially available sterile labels should be used whenever possible.
- Any medications or solutions found unlabeled are immediately discarded.
- All original containers from medications or solutions remain available for reference in the procedure area until the conclusion of the procedure.
- Whenever staffing changes during a procedure, all medications and solutions both on and off the sterile field and their labels are reviewed by entering and exiting personnel.
- **For Sterile procedures:**
  - Labels may also be created by using sterile steri-strips and a sterile marker.
  - All labeled containers on the sterile field are discarded at the conclusion of the procedure.

**REVISION HISTORY**

Effective Date:

Review Date:

Revised Date: