

# POLICY MANUAL

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**Subject:** DO NOT USE Abbreviation List      **Effective Date:** June 18, 2004

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**Initiated By:** Cinde Stewart Freeman  
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**Review Dates:** 11/08 RJ/DNF; 02/09 BLA, 03/10 RJ    **Revision Dates:** 11/13 SGDF  
11/14 SG

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## POLICY:

The Joint Commission and the Institute of Safe Medication Practices have determined that certain abbreviations may lead to patient care errors. To assist in preventing such errors, a DO NOT USE Abbreviation List has been developed. These abbreviations should not be used in a patient care record at any time.

## PROCEDURE:

1. The attached list of DO NOT USE abbreviations and chemical symbols has been approved for non-use by those documenting in the patient record. The list further explains the potential problem arising from use of these specified abbreviations as well as the preferred terminology as a replacement.
2. If a staff member notices one or more of these abbreviations being used in a patient record, the staff member using the unapproved abbreviation should be contacted and clarification of the meaning of the abbreviation should be confirmed. The staff member confirming should enter a general note titling it as, "clarification", and the actual word for the abbreviation, sign his/her name, date and time, as you would if you were writing an order and/or correcting an error.
3. Staff members or Licensed Independent Professionals (LIPs) who are found consistently to have issues with the use of these unapproved abbreviations will be counseled by their supervisors and/or Privileges & Credentials Committee.

# DO NOT USE ABBREVIATIONS, CLINICAL SERVICES

As approved by Cumberland Heights Treatment Center

ABBREVIATION	POTENTIAL PROBLEM	PREFERRED TERM
U (for unit)	Mistaken as zero, four or cc.	Write "unit"
IU (for international unit)	Mistaken as IV (intravenous) or 10 (ten)	Write "international unit"
QD, Q.D., QOD, Q.O.D., QH, QID, qd, q.d., qid	Mistaken for each other. The period after the Q can be mistaken for an "I" and the "o" can be mistaken for an "l"	Write "every day, every other day, every hour, 4x/day"
<i>NOTE: Q<sub>2</sub>H, Q<sub>4</sub>H, etc. are also prohibited</i>		
Trailing zero (X.o mg) or lack of leading zero (.X mg)	Decimal point is missed	Never write a zero by itself after a decimal point (X mg) and always use a zero before a decimal point (o.X mg)
MS, MSO <sub>4</sub> , MgSO <sub>4</sub>	Confused for one another. Can mean morphine sulfate or magnesium sulfate.	Write "morphine sulfate" or "magnesium sulfate"
ug (for microgram)	Mistaken for mg (milligrams) resulting in one thousand-fold dosing overdose	Write "mcg"
TIW (for three times a week)	Mistaken for three times a day or twice weekly resulting in an overdose.	Write "3 X/wk"
AS, AD, AU	Mistaken for OS, OD, and OU etc.	Write "left ear, right ear, both ears"