

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER
POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

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Policy 152 – Outpatient Drug/ Prescriptions

I. POLICY

It is the philosophy of Southern Highlands Community Mental Health Center that all medical policies and procedures adhere to sound medical practices and ethics. Our primary consideration is that the consumer be evaluated as much as possible in his totality and that the consumer's total physical welfare, not just psychiatric considerations, be addressed and referrals made for evaluation and treatment of physical needs. All aspects of drug handling will promote consumer well-being and safety.

All medical policies will be implemented and supervised under the auspices of the Center's physicians. The Center's physicians are not solely responsible for providing all consumer care as outlined in this policy. They may delegate to other members of the professional clinical team certain duties and responsibilities which they are trained and licensed to carry out. Please refer to HIPAA Policy 507 – Designated Record Set for additional information.

II. PROCEDURES

A. PRESCRIPTIONS

1. All written prescriptions are in duplicate with the copy being retained in the consumer record. Verbal, telephone, and standing orders are documented in the consumer record in a progress note on approval by the physician or physician extender.
2. Prescriptions for controlled drugs will not be re-issued or called in to pharmacy until the previous prescription and refills have lapsed and upon order by physician or physician extender only in sufficient amount until the next appointment.
3. At the physician or physician extender discretion, prescriptions may be called in after one missed appointment if the appointment has been rescheduled. The refill will be written to last until the next appointment. If a second appointment is missed, the physician or physician assistant will

call in a prescription only in extraordinary exceptions including but not limited to the Center canceling the appointment.

4. All prescriptions may be sent by e-RX to the designated pharmacy. The electronic medical record section (Order Connect) maintains a record of all electronic prescriptions.
5. No outpatient prescriptions will be written for medication not associated with treatment of the consumer's psychiatric disorder (i.e., pain medication).

B. MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

1. Purchased Medication – Medication purchased by Southern Highlands Community Mental Health Center for emergency chemotherapy shall be administered by the Registered Nurse, Physician, or Licensed Practical Nurse, under the supervision of a Registered Nurse or Physician, from the Center stock.
2. Individually Prescribed Medication – All individually prescribed medication shall be packaged by a pharmacist in accordance with state law unless administered by a Physician, a Registered Nurse or a Licensed Practical Nurse under the supervision of a Physician or Registered Nurse, and shall be delivered directly to the administering site in an unopened package which has been sealed by the pharmacist.
3. Pharmaceutical Samples – All pharmaceutical samples are issued to and maintained by the Center physicians in locked areas to use at their discretion for consumers.

C. PATIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Southern Highlands Community Mental Health Center will assist consumers who meet SHCMHC criteria for referral to various pharmaceutical companies to participate in their programs for indigent patients. The criteria for referral is:

1. Axis I diagnosis as determined by the psychiatrist.

and

2. Considered 100% discount for receiving services at SHCMHC.
3. Is not eligible for Medicaid, Medicare, as verified by letter of denial, or private insurances which cover prescriptions.

4. No Benzodiazepines will be prescribed under this program.

The consumer will also have to meet the eligibility requirements of the various pharmaceutical companies. Minor tranquilizers are not part of this program.

The process for participation in the Patient Assistance Program is:

1. The physician evaluates the consumer's need for medication. After the consumer is stabilized on a medication and there is a continuing need for medication, the physician will indicate to the nurse that the consumer meets diagnostic criteria and to start the enrollment process.
 - a. The nurse gives the consumer the appropriate applications to be completed and returned with the necessary documents verifying income and letters of denial for Medicaid.
 - b. When the application is completed with all the necessary information, the nurse will forward these documents to the appropriate pharmaceutical company.
2. Consumers who are non-compliant with treatment, fail to meet the requirements and frequently miss appointments may be considered not eligible for the program. All consumers who are enrolled will be given in writing an outline of requirements for participation and notice that this program is made possible by the pharmaceutical companies and Southern Highlands is not responsible for assuring that the medication is secured for the consumer.
3. The nurse will enter documentation in the consumer's medical record of dates applications are mailed to drug companies, dates medication is received or denied, sent to pharmacy, and any information from the drug company regarding participation will be filed in the medical record.
4. When medications are received from the pharmaceutical company, the prescription is reviewed, the amount is entered into the medical record. The pharmacist signs the log as having received the medication. The dispensing pharmacist stores, dispenses, keeps records and destroys any unused medication as per contract. Any questions about the medication are directed to the prescribing physician or Center nurse.
5. At each pharmacological medication appointment, the continued need for indigent medications will be addressed. When appropriate, the program will be discontinued. At such time the consumer is discharged, the medication is canceled, other funding sources are found, or the consumer

withdraws from the program, the medication is disposed of by the pharmacist at the contracted pharmacy.

6. The physician will periodically review the list of indigent prescription program participants to assess further continuation.

D. ASSERTIVE COMMUNITY TREATMENT MEDICATION HANDLING

Community Consumers served by the ACT program may require assistance with taking their medication as it is prescribed and on a consistent basis. This outlines the process to be used in handing, dispensing, reconciling, and destroying these medications and for scheduled prompting to take medications.

The ACT Registered Nurse will oversee the medication delivery process and the guidelines for medication prompts. Any medications being delivered, dispensed, administered, or reconciled for destroying are to only be handled by a SHCMHC licensed nurse under the direction of an active physician order and active prescription, dispensed and labeled by a pharmacy.

1. The ACT Registered Nurse develops and maintains a medication profile on each ACT consumer.
2. A licensed nurse will monitor consumer progress and any medication problems at each visit. This is documented in a progress note and reported to the Act team at the next team meeting.
3. The consumer's treatment plan will outline how the medication is delivered, others involved with the medication process, and how the consumer can contact a licensed nurse regarding medication issues.
4. At the first visit and when changes are made, the licensed nurse will provide education to the consumer and/or approved caregivers. This will include the medication regimen, dosage, purpose, frequency, and potential side effects. The licensed nurse will also provide information on temperature, lighting, moisture, as well as, security, safety, and storage.
5. The staff member delivering the medication to the consumer will ensure that the medication is initially securely stored.
6. At no time will medication be left in the home with a person not recognized, trained and approved by the team and consumer as a caregiver.

7. In an acceptable time frame after a medication change, a licensed and skilled nurse will gather data and document the consumer's response and notify the ACT RN of any problems that have developed.
8. A physician or physician extender will order all medications administered or dispensed to consumers. All verbal orders will be taken only by a SHCMHC licensed nurse.
9. The ACT RN will evaluate the accuracy of the medication delivery system at all times. Any medication error will immediately be reported to the ACT RN, Chief Nursing Officer, attending physician or physician extender and the contracted pharmacist. Every effort will be made to determine the nature of the error and teaching will be done to prevent re-occurrence of the error. An adverse incident report and medication discrepancy report will be completed within 24 hours. If the consumer has suffered an adverse reaction due to the medication error the attending physician or physician extender will be notified immediately and emergency medical care arranged.
10. A licensed pharmacist who is under a formal agreement with SHCMHC will advise ACT program staff on ordering, storage, administration, disposal and needed recorded keeping of medications in coordination with the Chief Nursing Officer.
11. All medications are to be filled by a pharmacy and dispensed in compliance with Federal and State laws. A record will be maintained of the receipt, dispensing, and reconciliation for pharmacy return. When the licensed nurse picks up medications at the pharmacy a log will be signed by the nurse and pharmacist. This log will track all medications received. When the medication is delivered to the consumer, the consumer (or designated caregiver) and nurse will sign a log for the medication and when the medication is to be returned to the pharmacy the consumer (or designated caregiver) will sign with the nurse on amount to be delivered to the pharmacy. When the nurse takes medication to the pharmacy, the nurse and pharmacist will sign for the amount returned and the log is scanned into the medical record.
12. Medications will be labeled by the supplying pharmacist in accepted principles which include any instructions as well as expiration date. All medications stored at SHCMHC will be stored in a secure area. All controlled medications will be double locked.
13. Any SHCMHC staff who misuses a medication will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment. This

will also be reported to any applicable licensing board and local legal authorities. (See Drug Free Workplace Policy 232)

14. The licensed nurse will monitor for patterns of misuse in the consumer's home. Any suspicious circumstances will be reported to the supervising RN and the team leader. The RN will notify the prescribing physician of possible misuse in the consumer's home.
15. Any medication stored at SHCMHC will be counted weekly by the ACT RN and a designated person. All controlled medications will be counted daily. The consumer will record all dosages taken on the consumer medication sheet.
16. Residential Drugs/ Prescriptions Policy 149 addresses the medication protocols for Residential ACT consumers.

Medication Prompts:

For those ACT consumers who have difficulty remembering to take their medication, the licensed nurse may call or visit the consumer as often as needed to offer medication prompts.

Discontinued ACT Services:

Any medications not delivered to the consumer when a discontinuation of services occurs will be returned to the consumer or to the dispensing pharmacy as outlined above.