Syringe Labeling: Give Nurses Peace of Mind

All nurses worry about medication errors, but unlabeled injectables are of particular concern, especially considering that most are clear liquids, indistinguishable once they are in a syringe. Harmful or fatal medication errors are three times more likely to occur via injection compared with other routes.\(^3\)

When you consider that nearly half of nurses administer injectable medications more than five times per shift, it’s easy to see how great the potential for error can be. Yet the practice of labeling syringes is inconsistent among nurses. A survey by the American Nurses Association regarding injectable medication errors found:  

- 37% always label syringes  
- 28% never label syringes

Omnicell’s Medication Label Printer makes it convenient to label syringes without having to handwrite information. During beta testing, 81% of nurses agreed that the label printer provided a noticeable increase in peace of mind regarding patient safety and compliance with Joint Commission regulations.

Reduce Costs and Missing Doses

- Reduce medication errors, which can be costly\(^5\)  
- Reduce missing doses: Each missing dose = 15 minutes of unplanned work for both nursing and pharmacy  
- Reduce waste caused by mislabeled open multi-use medication

Ideal for:

- Omnicell cabinets located near procedure areas such as cath or GI labs, where medications are often prepared in advance.  
- Omnicell cabinets that incorporate our SinglePointe™ patient medication management system: patient-specific medication can be labeled as it is removed from the cabinet.

Meet ISMP Guidelines

The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) advocates proper labeling of medications, particularly for drugs with look-alike or sound-alike names, and those with non-distinct drug packaging.\(^2\) Omnicell worked closely with the ISMP to ensure the label content and format adheres to their medication label guidelines. See the back side for label details.

“According to NPSG 3, all medications, medication containers, and solutions must be labeled unless they are administered immediately. ...failure to properly label medications is ‘unsafe’ and ‘neglects basic principles of safe medication management’...”

—Kate Traynor, Joint Commission Updates National Patient Safety Goals for 2010, AJHP News, December 1, 2009

“According to NPSG 3, all medications, medication containers, and solutions must be labeled unless they are administered immediately. ...failure to properly label medications is ‘unsafe’ and ‘neglects basic principles of safe medication management’...”

—Kate Traynor, Joint Commission Updates National Patient Safety Goals for 2010, AJHP News, December 1, 2009

“According to NPSG 3, all medications, medication containers, and solutions must be labeled unless they are administered immediately. ...failure to properly label medications is ‘unsafe’ and ‘neglects basic principles of safe medication management’...”

—Kate Traynor, Joint Commission Updates National Patient Safety Goals for 2010, AJHP News, December 1, 2009
Put an End to Mystery Medications
Each label provides clear and complete information.

- Large font and bold information makes it easy to quickly identify critical information; label design is based on ISMP label guidelines.
- Beyond-use date is included on label when expiration tracking is in use.
- Multi-component support: For nurse-prepared medication orders an individual label is printed for each component.

Flexible Functionality

Auto printing: Pharmacy can configure software to have labels automatically print when high-risk and multi-use items are issued.

On-demand printing: Nurses have the option of printing a label during medication issue.

Bar code scan checkpoint: Option to require bar code scanning of the medication before printing the label to ensure the correct item is in hand. (Requires Omnicell SafetyStock® bar code confirmation software)

Include bar code on label: Having the medication bar code facilitates bedside scanning – eliminates need to bring physical medication package to the bedside. (Requires Omnicell SafetyStock bar code confirmation software).

References

5 According to the “Preventing Medication Errors” report by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, National Academies Press, July 20, 2006, the conservative estimate of 400,000 preventable drug-related injuries in hospitals would result in at least $3.5 billion in extra medical costs that year [2006].