



Medication Error Reduction Plan (MERP) Program

Loriann De Martini, Pharm.D.
Chief Pharmaceutical Consultant
Center for Healthcare Quality
California Department of Public Health

MERP Program Mission

- Promote safe and effective medication use in hospitals through reduction of preventable medication-related errors and adverse events. Program's objectives will be achieved through:
 - The Department's survey activities whereby each hospital's MERP will be assessed for implementation and compliance with applicable laws and regulations and,
 - Ongoing collaborative efforts with stakeholders to advance medication safety strategies statewide to decrease identified system vulnerabilities.

Medication Error Reduction Plan

- Hospitals must develop and implement a formal plan to eliminate or substantially reduce medication-related errors.
 - Submitted to and approved by CDPH
 - Implemented by 2005
 - Must include technology
- CDPH required to monitor implementation

Medication-Related Error (Procedures/Systems)

- Prescribing
- Prescription order communication
- Product labeling
- Packaging and nomenclature
- Compounding
- Dispensing
- Distribution
- Administration
- Education
- Monitoring
- Use

Health and Safety Code (HSC) 1339.63(d)

MERP Survey Activities

- Review of facility MERP
 - Implemented
 - Effectiveness
 - Modified
- Clinical record review
- Identification and review of Medication Errors
- Evaluation of high risk medication use
- Observation of medication administration
- Distribution and storage of medications

MERP Survey Summary

January 2009 – July 2011

- 374 – Hospitals to be surveyed
- 290 – Completed surveys (78%)
- 267 – Noted deficiencies (92%)
 - Average three deficiencies per survey
- 23 – In compliance (8%)

Data as of 8/11/11

MERP Survey Deficiencies

- Failure to develop policies and procedures for safe use of medications – 60%
- Failure to conduct an annual review to assess effectiveness of the implementation of MERP – 59%
- Failure to identify weakness or deficiencies that could contribute to errors – 43%
- Failure to include a multidisciplinary process to regularly analyze all errors – 41%

Medication Safety System Vulnerabilities

- Management of High Risk Medications
 - Fentanyl Transdermal Patch
- Provision of Emergency Medications
 - Adequate supplies – Malignant hyperthermia
 - Competency
- Safe Storage of Medications
 - Refrigeration
 - Concentrated solutions



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→ Local Health

Home > Programs > Licensing and Certification > Medication Error Reduction Plan Program

Medication Error Reduction Plan (MERP) Program

Program's Mission

The MERP Program endeavors to promote safe and effective medication use in General Acute Care Hospitals (GACH) through reduction of preventable medication-related errors and adverse events.

The program's objectives will be achieved through:

The Department's survey activities whereby each hospital's MERP will be assessed for implementation and compliance in accordance with [Health and Safety Code Section 1339.63](#), including [California Code of Regulations, Title 22](#); and, ongoing collaborative efforts with stakeholders to advance medication safety strategies statewide to decrease identified system vulnerabilities.

MERP E-mail

In our ongoing efforts to provide transparency and collaboration with providers and the public, CDPH, has email address for individuals to submit MERP related questions or comments. The email address will provide a central point of contact where facilities and other interested parties can send emails in regards to MERP surveys and/or the MERP survey process. The email address is: MERP@cdph.ca.gov. Each email received will be acknowledged and the appropriate response subsequently sent by return email. Email responses from the MERP mailbox will be sent under the name "CDPH L&C MERP" unless the incoming email is forwarded for further research and specific individual response.