

FOCUS ON ERROR PREVENTION

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COMPUTERIZED PHYSICIAN ORDER ENTRY (CPOE)

The misinterpretation of handwritten prescriptions is a common source of medication errors. However, the increase in use of computer generated prescriptions is a positive step in the prevention of errors caused by illegible handwriting.

With the introduction of this new technology, pharmacists must be aware of the potential for new types of errors. Errors seen with computerized physician order entry (CPOE) include: omission of key information, inappropriate abbreviation, conflicting information, selection of an incorrect drug from a drop down menu, etc.

CASE:

Rx

Medication: pantoprazole magnesium 40mg tablet

Sig: 1 tablet two times daily

Quantity: 180 tablets

Limited Use code: 293

The above prescription was computer generated, signed and given to a 75 year old patient. The prescription was taken to a local community pharmacy for processing. The pharmacy assistant noticed that

the patient was over sixty five years old and therefore covered by the Ontario Drug Benefit Program. She also noticed that the prescriber included a Limited Use code of 293 which is a "reason for use code" for Pantoloc[®]. The prescription was therefore entered as Apo-Pantoprazole[®] 40mg tablets.

On checking the prescription, the pharmacist noticed that Apo-Pantoprazole[®] was pantoprazole sodium and not pantoprazole magnesium as prescribed. The prescription was therefore cancelled and dispensed as pantoprazole magnesium (Tecta[®]).

Approximately three months later, the patient requested a refill of the Tecta[®] tablets. On contacting the prescriber for authorization to dispense the medication, he stated that he did not prescribe Tecta[®] initially. Following an investigation, the error was discovered and the details discussed with the physician.

POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS:

- The computer generated prescription included conflicting information. The physician prescribed pantoprazole magnesium (Tecta[®]), but provided the Limited Use code for pantoprazole sodium (Pantoloc[®]).


TABLE 1

Pantoprazole sodium	Pantoprazole magnesium
Diclofenac potassium	Diclofenac sodium
Hydrocortisone (Emo-Cort [®])	Hydrocortisone acetate (Hyderm [®])
Morphine sulphate	Morphine HCL
Docusate sodium	Docusate calcium
Testosterone cypionate	Testosterone enanthate



- The pharmacist did not contact the prescriber to clarify the ambiguous information.
- The physician likely selected pantoprazole magnesium from a drop down menu instead of pantoprazole sodium as he had intended to prescribe.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Though computer generated prescriptions can minimize medication errors due to illegible handwriting, be aware that new types of errors may be introduced.
- Always contact the prescriber to clarify ambiguous prescriptions.
- Become familiar with drugs that are available in different forms that are not interchangeable. Examples are included below in Table 1. 

Please continue to send reports of medication errors in confidence to:
Ian Stewart at: ian.stewart2@rogers.com
 Please ensure that all identifying information (e.g. patient name, pharmacy name, healthcare provider name, etc.) are removed before submitting.

BULLETIN BOARD

CLASS OF 8T8 REUNION

Our 25th reunion will be taking place on the weekend of June 1/2 in Toronto. We have started a Facebook page - 8T8 Pharmacy and would encourage you all to join so that we can get information out to everyone. Alternatively, please email Jane Bamford at rbamford@execulink.com.

CLASS OF 9T3 REUNION

20 Year Reunion! Class of 9T3, Faculty of Pharmacy, UofT. We will be holding an event to mark this momentous occasion on the weekend of Aug 10, 2013. This is the weekend after the long weekend. The reunion will take place at Deerhurst Resort in lovely Huntsville, Ontario which has something for everybody, adult and kids alike.

Please contact Tom Kontio at tkontio@rogers.com for registration information. Room bookings have already begun, don't miss out.

MEMBERS EMERITUS

Any pharmacist who has practiced continually in good standing in Ontario and/or other jurisdictions for at least 25 years can voluntarily resign from the Register and make an application for the Member Emeritus designation. Members Emeritus are not permitted to practice pharmacy in Ontario but will be added to the roll of persons so designated, receive a certificate and continue to receive Pharmacy Connection at no charge.

For more information, contact Client Services at 416-962-4861 ext 3300 or email ocpclientservices@ocpinfo.com