

Protocol: Prohibited Abbreviations

Purpose: To ensure clear communication between health care practitioners and to avoid misinterpretation on the medical record or prescription transmittal forms.

Procedure:

- 1.0 Abbreviations are shortened forms of words and phrases intended to promote efficiency.
- 2.0 Certain abbreviations may cause confusion unless they are universally understood.
- 3.0 (Clinic) has a list of approved abbreviations that have been reviewed and accepted by the CMO and the medical staff.
- 4.0 There are certain abbreviations that are UNACCEPTABLE for use, and are as follows:
 - 4.1 No abbreviations are permissible in the final diagnosis.
 - 4.2 No abbreviations are permitted on a death certificate
 - 4.3 For medications you may not use **Continue Medications, Resume Medications, or Renew Medications.**
- 5.0 Official JCAHO Prohibited Abbreviations include:

Abbreviation	Potential Problem	Preferred Term
U for Unit	Mistaken as o, 4 or c.c.	Write "unit"
Q.D. Q.O.D.	Mistaken for each other. The Q can be mistaken for an "I" and the "O" can be mistaken for the "I"	Write "daily" and "every other day"
Trailing 0 Lack of leading 0	Decimal point is missed.	Never write a zero by itself after a decimal point (X.) and always use a zero before a decimal point (0.X)
MS MSO4 MgSO4	Confused for one another Can mean morphine sulfate or magnesium sulfate	Write "morphine sulfate" or "magnesium sulfate"
(g (for microgram)	Mistaken for mg	Write "mcg"

	(milligrams) resulting in one thousand-fold dosing overdose	
H.S.	Mistaken for half-strength or hour of sleep. q.H.S. mistaken for every hour. All can result in a dosing error	Write out "half-strength" or "at bedtime"
T.I.W.	Mistaken for three times a day or twice weekly resulting in an overdose.	Write "3 times weekly" or "three times weekly"
S.C. S.Q. for subcutaneous	Mistaken for S.L. for sublingual or "5 every"	Write "Sub-Q" or "subQ" or "subcutaneously"
D/C For discharge	Interpreted as discontinue whatever medications follow	Write "discharge"
c.c.	Mistaken for units when poorly written	Write "ml"
A.S, A.D, A.U (ears) O.S, O.D, O.U (eyes)	Mistaken for each other	Write "left ear, right ear, both ears" or "left eye, right eye, both eyes"
dr for dram		write out the word
gr for grain		write out the word
ss for one-half.		Use $\frac{1}{2}$ instead