

NURSING SERVICE GUIDELINES INPATIENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Guideline: Care of the patient on
psychotropic medication



Policy Number Superseded:

Responsibility: Trained Inpatient Behavioral
Health Personnel.

Effective Date:
July 2026

Purpose of Guideline: To ensure inpatient
unit staff understand the appropriate steps
involved in administering medications and
monitoring possible patient reactions.

Initial Effective Date:
July 2005

(A) Procedure

- (1) Obtain baseline screening on admission and as ordered.
 - (a) Baseline screening includes vital signs, labs (if ordered), mental status, and weight.
 - (b) Review vital signs before administering any medication and notify provider if abnormal.
- (2) Verify the “5 rights” of medication administration before administering.
- (3) Make note of any observed or reported side effects or reactions to medications and report to the provider.
- (4) Document the following in the electronic health record.
 - (c) Time, pulse, and BP (indicating sitting or standing position).
 - (d) Any complaints from the patient.
 - (e) If the medication was held and why.
 - (f) If the physician was notified.

Guideline:

Care of the patient on psychotropic medication

(5) HOLD medication and NOTIFY physician for:

- (a) Newly irregular pulse.
- (b) Pulse less than 50 beats per minute.
- (c) Pulse greater than 130 beats per minute.

(B) References

Hemingway, Steve. (2016). Mental health nurses' medicines management role: A qualitative content analysis. *Nurse Prescribing*. 14. 84-91.

Approved by:

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Initial effective date:

July 2005

Review/Revision Completed by:

Inpatient Psychiatry Administration

Review/Revision Date:

April 2008

August 31, 2010

May 2014

August 2014

September 2017

September 2020

October 2023

July 2026

Next review date: 7/2029