

LifeBridge Health

Hospital Administrative Policy

Use of Abbreviations and Symbols

PURPOSE:

To highlight dangerous abbreviations that are often misinterpreted and to avoid their use in charting and writing of orders and to ensure accurate interpretation of abbreviations used in documenting in the medical record.

POLICY:

The use of abbreviations should be avoided when documenting in the medical record.

Hospital staff documenting in the patient record may not use the abbreviations from the Do Not Use List Of Abbreviations (see attached list).

An abbreviation on the "Do Not Use" list should not be used in any of its forms – upper or lower case; with or without periods.

Original Date: 1/91

Review Date: 10/07

Revised Date: 5/93, 11/93, 1/96, 10/99
12/02, 3/03, 7/05, 4/08

Warren A. Green

Date

President and Chief Executive Officer

APPENDICES:

Reference List

Barbara Epke
Vice President

Date

SOURCES:

Neil Davis Medical Abbreviations

SUPERCEDES: Do Not Use Abbreviation List Policy

Collaborator(s):

Chiefs
Ambulatory Operations
Health Information Management
Nursing Directors
Nutrition Services
Performance Improvement/Risk
Management/Case Management
Pharmacy

MEC APPROVAL: 7/08

**LIST OF DO NOT USE ABBREVIATIONS -
NOT For Use in Charting and Writing Orders:**

Do Not Use Abbreviation	Potential Problem	Preferred Term
U (unit)	Mistaken for “0” (zero), the number “4” (four) or “cc”	Write “unit”
IU (International Unit)	Mistaken as IV (intravenous) or the number 10 (ten)	Write “International Unit”
Q.D., QD, q.d., qd (daily)	Mistaken for each other. Period after the Q mistaken for “I” and the “O” mistaken for “I”	Write “daily”
Q.O.D., QOD, q.o.d., qod (every other day)		Write “every other day”
Trailing Zero (X.0 mg) Lack of leading zero (.Xmg)	Decimal point is missed	Never write a zero by itself and after a decimal point (x mg), and always use a zero before a decimal point (0.x mg)
MS MSO ₄ MgSO ₄	Confused for one another. Can mean morphine sulfate or magnesium sulfate	Write “morphine sulfate” or “magnesium sulfate”

Implementation/Procedure

1. Only those abbreviations defined in a published resource (e.g., Davis, Stedmans, etc.), the LifeBridge Abbreviation Reference List or defined in the legend on the form may be used.
- 2. None of the Do Not Use Abbreviations may be used.**
3. The Neil M. Davis Medical Abbreviations electronic published resource and the LifeBridge Abbreviation Reference list may be accessed via our INTRANET. Any recommended additions to the reference list will be presented to the Documentation Management Committee at Sinai and/or the Multidisciplinary Performance Improvement Committee at Northwest Hospital.
4. Caution should be exercised when using/interpreting an abbreviation which has more than one meaning – use/interpret all abbreviations in the appropriate context.