



MEDICATION ERRORS

Serious or lethal medication errors can be an expensive litigation and liability exposure. In addition to the mental anguish this creates with the families and nursing home staff over losing a loved one or resident in this manner, the courts have been quite harsh in ruling that the homes were derelict in their duty to safely administer medications to the residents.

- Encourage all nursing staff to report any suspected medication errors and/or omissions upon discovery.
- Have specific policies related to what steps need to be taken in the event of this occurrence.
- Adequately train all nursing staff on these policies and emphasize that the goal of medication error reporting is correction and not fault finding.
- Keep a written copy of these policies near the nurse's station so that it is accessible to staff if needed.
- Promptly notify the resident's physician and responsible party of all significant errors.
- Frequently evaluate the affected resident for potential adverse effects specifically related to the error.
- Document the event and all subsequent actions in the resident's chart and appropriate incident reporting form, per facility policy.
- Investigate all reports to determine contributing factors and to assure corrective action is taken.
- Keep and track each error record so that the quality assurance team can evaluate if there are any emerging trends or patterns.

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