USE AND DISPOSAL OF PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

SAMPLE POLICY 2018

Regulatory Citation(s): 42 CFR 418.106(e)(2); 418.106(e)(2)(A); 418.106(e)(2)(B); 418.106(e)(2)(C)
Annotated Code of Maryland House Bill 407, Section 19-194, Chapter 439

L-Tag(s): 694, 695, 696, 697

POLICY: Hospice instructs patients/caregivers in the safe use and disposal of prescription medications and performs disposal in accordance with State and Federal regulations. This policy applies only to patients residing in a home setting, and does not apply to nursing facility, assisted living facility, or hospice house residents.

PROCEDURES

1. At the time of hospice admission, the hospice employee:
   a. provides a copy of the hospice’s written policies and procedures on the management and disposal of prescription medications to the patient or patient representative and family;
   b. discusses the hospice’s policies and procedures for managing the safe use and disposal of prescription medications with the patient or representative and the family in a language and manner that they understand; and
   c. documents in the patient’s clinical record that the written policies and procedures for managing prescription medications were provided and discussed.

2. Patient/family education regarding the hospice’s policies and procedures on prescription medications may be in the form of written educational information.

3. All additional education/information provided to the patient/family related to prescription medications is documented in the patient’s clinical record.

4. The hospice nurse counts and reconciles medications during every visit to ensure that proper quantities are available and are taken by the patient as prescribed by the physician.
PROCEDURES: **Disposal**

1. Prescription medications should be disposed of as soon as practicable after the death of the patient or discontinuation of a prescription medication by the patient’s prescriber.

2. Prescription medications no longer needed by the patient are disposed of in accordance with federal Environmental Protection Agency and federal Drug Enforcement Agency guidelines for the safe disposal of prescription drugs.

3. Hospice staff may only dispose of a patient’s prescription medication after receipt of written authorization by the patient or patient’s family member or representative.
   a. Disposal by a hospice employee must be witnessed by one of the following:
      i. The patient
      j. The patient’s family member or representative
      k. Another hospice employee or
      l. A local law enforcement officer

4. Documentation of collection and disposal of prescription medications by hospice employees must include:
   a. The name and quantity of each unused medication
   b. The name of the individual authorizing disposal
   c. The relationship to the patient of the individual authorizing disposal
   d. The date of disposal
   e. The name of the individual disposing of medications
   f. The name of the individual witnessing disposal

5. If a patient or patient’s family member or representative refuse to authorize disposal of prescription medications, the following information must be documented in the medical record:
   a. The refusal to authorize disposal of prescription medications
   b. The name and quantity of each medication not surrendered

6. Patients or representatives who refuse collection and disposal of prescription medications will be encouraged to dispose of the medication. Hospice staff will provide information regarding safe and effective methods for disposing of medications, including voluntary options such as drug take-back events, mail back programs and collection receptacles for drug disposal.