

State of Iowa Department of Corrections

Policy and Procedures

Policy Number: HSP-625

Applicability: DOC

Policy Code: Public Access

Iowa Code Reference: N/A

Chapter 6: Health Services

Sub Chapter: Acute/Specialty Services

Related DOC Policies: N/A

Administrative Code Reference: N/A

Subject: Nursing Protocol

ACA Standards: 5-ACI-6B-03

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Authority:

1. PURPOSE

To ensure that licensed nursing staff has appropriate guidelines for assessment and management of common health conditions in the Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC) population.

2. POLICY

A licensed nurse may utilize these established protocols as authorized by an IDOC practitioner.

3. DEFINITIONS

- A. Protocol – Written instructions or guidelines that specify the steps to be taken in evaluating a patient’s health status and providing interventions.
- B. See IDOC Policy AD-GA-16 for additional Definitions.

4. PROCEDURE

- A. Licensed nursing staff must review and have a working knowledge of the approved protocols prior to the use of any protocols. This includes but is

not limited to contraindications. The medications in the approved protocols may not be dispensed for a purpose not identified in the protocol. Documentation shall provide evidence criteria for use of that protocol.

- B. Nurses are expected to practice within their licensure, training and experience when using protocols. When in doubt about the assessment and management of a patient, it should be referred to an advanced level provider. The protocols serve as guidelines for sound nursing practice and should be used during health encounters to assess and treat patients.
 - 1. An assessment needs to be conducted by a licensed nurse who shall identify and document the need for medication.
 - 2. Review the patient's history and provide additional assessment as necessary to ensure data collection and diagnosis is consistent with the protocol.
 - 3. Review for any contraindications or warnings regarding the medication, such as drug interactions or allergies
 - 4. Provide instructions to the patient for use and purpose of the medication.
 - 5. Use of identified protocols will be reviewed and co-signed on the next administrative day by the institutional staff practitioner.
- C. The Nursing Protocols will be an appendix to the DOC Health Services Manual. These protocols will be reviewed annually by members of the DOC Pharmacy and Therapeutic Committee and approved by the DOC Health Services Administrator and DOC Nursing Administrator.
- D. Approved nursing protocols may be accessed by following these steps:
 - 1. Go to the Internet
 - 2. DOC Home
 - 3. Policies & Procedures
 - 4. DOC Policies (Current)
 - 5. Section 6 – Health Services

6. DOC Nursing Protocol Folder

- E. Nursing Protocols shall be reviewed as part of HSF-201, Nursing Orientation Checklist for new employees and periodically for health services staff when changes are implemented.
 - 1. Copies of Nursing Protocols shall be available in health services areas for easy access to nursing staff (ie: work station, pharmacy, exam rooms, etc.)
 - 2. Nursing Directors will review nursing encounters where Nursing Protocols are utilized as part of QI/QA.