Pre-Pouring Medications

Pre-pouring medications is the process of preparing medications in advance and then storing them until administering to the patient. A review into patient harm events has discovered that pre-pouring medications is unacceptable because the medications:

- Cannot accurately be compared to the Medications Administration Record (MAR)
- Violates at least two of the seven rights of medication administration (right patient & right medication), dramatically increasing the probability of medication errors

Medications packaged in unit dose should be opened at bedside

Medications in bulk bottles may be poured into medication cup that is clearly labelled

Action

Adhere to the following best practices when administering medications:

- Administer medications immediately after preparation.
- Administer medications to one patient at a time.
- Take the MAR to the point of care for easy reference.
- Ensure medication cup is labeled with patient name, drug name(s), dose(s) and administration time.
- Always perform the seven rights of medication administration:
  - Right medication
  - Right patient (use 2 unique identifiers)
  - Right dose
  - Right time & frequency
  - Right route
  - Right reason
  - Right documentation (document immediately on MAR)
- Wash hands after contact with the MAR to reduce the incidence of nosocomial infection.