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<b>SUBJECT/TITLE</b> USE OF HOLD ORDERS IN LTC	<b>ORIGINAL DATE</b> 30-Aug-2007
	<b>REVISION EFFECTIVE DATE</b> 30-Sept-2019

## OBJECTIVES

- To provide guidance to physicians, pharmacy providers, and LTC operators on the use of Hold Orders in Calgary Zone LTC.

## ELEMENTS

- Hold Orders are strongly discouraged.**
  - LTC operators may determine through their sites' medication management committees to not permit the use of any hold orders.
  - Whenever possible, it is preferable for the order to be written as a discontinuation (stop) order.
- If used, Hold Orders should include the specific hold information by indicating at least one of the following parameters:**
  - The specific date(s) to be held and the date and direction to restart;
  - The specific number of doses to be held and the date and direction to restart;
  - The clinical parameters with specific monitoring and follow-up instructions to determine when to hold and when to administer the medication.
- The rationale for holding the medication should be noted directly in the Hold Order (preferably) or documented in the resident's health record (e.g. in the progress notes).**
- Hold Orders written without adequate parameters would not be accepted by nursing or pharmacy and should be clarified with the prescribing physician prior to processing.**
  - All clarifications should be reduced to a written medication order and communicated to the pertinent team members.
- Hold Orders would not be removed from the resident's medication profile.**
  - The order would be marked or identified as a hold.
  - The hold parameters (e.g. the dates to be held, the date to restart, the clinical parameters, etc.) would be entered in the medication order's directions (SIG).

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## APPENDIX A

### Examples of Hold Orders

The following are examples of acceptable and irregular Hold Orders.

(Example Order written on Jan 1, 2019 @ 14:00 pm –dose given for that day)

1. **Hold atenolol 25 mg once daily for 7 doses. Restart on January 9, 2019**
  - This Hold Order would be acceptable as it specifies the number of doses to be held and the date to restart. Note there are no follow-up instructions for nursing or pharmacy and thus assumes the prescriber would be initiating the follow-up, or no follow-up is required.
  
2. **Hold atenolol 25 mg from Jan 2 to Jan 8, 2019. Restart Jan 9, 2019. Query hypotension?**
  - This Hold Order would be acceptable as it specifies the dates to be held and the date to restart. Note there are no follow-up instructions for nursing or pharmacy and thus assumes the prescriber would be initiating the follow-up, or no follow-up is required.
  
3. **Hold atenolol 25 mg once daily. Monitor blood pressure once daily for 7 days and contact physician on Jan 8, 2019 for follow-up.**
  - This Hold Order would be acceptable, however; it demonstrates the complexity of using Hold Orders. The monitoring and follow-up instructions are included. Note there is no direction to restart. The administration and dispensing of the medication would not automatically resume on Jan 9<sup>th</sup>. On Jan 8<sup>th</sup>, nursing would contact the prescriber to obtain further direction to either discontinue or resume the medication. Pharmacy would need to await further orders either to resume dispensing or to discontinue the medication order.
  
4. **Hold atenolol 25 mg once daily for 7 days, then reassess.**
  - This Hold Order would NOT be acceptable. Nursing should clarify the additional hold parameters such as the date to restart or assessment and follow-up instruction before processing.

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**5. Discontinue atenolol 25mg once daily. Monitor BP once daily for 7 days and contact prescriber on Jan 8, 2019. Query hypotension.**

- This medication order is the most clear of the examples. Pharmacy would discontinue the order. Nursing is provided with monitoring and follow-up directions. At follow-up, the physician may provide a new order.

**REFERENCES**

- Appendix A: Examples of Hold Orders
- Alberta Health Services Governance Documents:
  - Medication Orders Policy (#PS-93)
  - Medication Orders Procedure (#PS-93-01)