

Inmate Health Self-Medication Med-Line (SM-ML) Protocol

1. The Department of Corrections shall maintain a Self-Medication Med-Line (SM-ML) program at appropriate facilities to allow prisoners who are medically approved to do so to self-administer their medication. Participation in this program is a privilege that comes with responsibilities to take the medication as directed, to share it with no other person, and to return to medical staff at the correct time to get more medication. Any prisoner who misuses this program may be removed from the Self-Medication program and/or be disciplined.
2. Self-Medication Med-Line (SM-ML) is a type of self-medication that only occurs when medical staff is not available to administer medication to prisoners. In this program, prisoners self-administer medication at Med-Line assisted by a Correctional Officer. However, when medical staff is available, medical staff shall routinely administer prisoners' medication (Medical Staff Administered Medication).
3. Medication containers may be blister cards, inhalers, bottles, etc., as dispensed from the pharmacy with the appropriate labeling and clearly stamped "SM-ML."
4. Prisoners must be approved by the health care practitioner to self-administer prescription medication. The approval will be designated on the practitioner's prescription for the medication in the medical record. A stamp is available for use to help structure the documentation of medication order in the medical record. This may be used for both practitioner-written orders as well as oral orders.
5. The IHCO shall not approve a prisoner to participate in this self-medication program if the superintendent or designee has made a determination that security constraints prohibit that particular prisoner or all prisoners from participating in the self-medication program. Security staff shall notify the IHCO in writing of any such determinations. The IHCO will not have to routinely clear authorization for self-medication through security.
6. A trained officer will hold med-line at specified times when medical staff is not present in the facility. The officer will not administer medications, but will instead assist the prisoner with self-medication.
7. The officer will identify the prisoner and hand the prisoner his/her pharmacy-labeled medication containers. The officer will closely supervise the prisoner to maintain control of the medication containers. The prisoner will take the appropriate pills out of the medication container. The officer will observe the prisoner properly taking the medication.
8. The officer will write the letter "S" (for self-med) in the appropriate box of the Medication Administration Chart (or the Remand Medication Form) for each medication taken. If the prisoner refuses to take the medication the officer will

draw a circle around the "S" to indicate that the prisoner did not take his/her medication. The officer will then return the medication to the storage area in the medication cart. Any problems will be reported to medical staff.

9. In facilities where security constraints make it reasonable to allow "PRN" (take as needed) self-medication at the med-line, then the practitioner may order SM-ML for distribution of PRN medications. In other facilities, however, this practice should be avoided. If the PRN medication is ordered and authorized for SM-ML, the prisoner may take the PRN medication based upon his/her own assessment that he/she is following the prescribing practitioner's guidelines. The prisoner shall document this in the Medication Administration Chart. Any problems will be reported to medical staff. Medical staff will periodically monitor the use of PRN medications and the prescribing practitioner will review any apparent misuse.
10. Liquid medications will not be distributed by the SM-ML method, nor will injections.
11. Controlled substances in blister cards will have a large red "C" stamped in the upper left corner. Only controlled substance blister cards that are also stamped with "SM-ML" will be accessible to officers assisting with SM-ML. Proper documentation will be maintained to account for the storage and use of each dosage. Dosage documentation consists of the prisoner initialing the Medication Administration Chart for each self-administered dosage. Additionally, a count sheet showing a descending count will be attached to each blister card containing controlled substances. Every time a dose is self-administered by the prisoner, both the prisoner and correctional officer will initial on the appropriate line on the count sheet acknowledging the descending count.
12. In the event that a medication is ordered that has not been approved for self-medication and no qualified medical staff is available to administer the medication, then either a nurse or the IHCO will be called in to the facility to administer the medication.