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strategies to minimize errors and harm from these medications and other hazardous pharmaceutical chemicals as much as possible.

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**MM.6 The hospital has a system for the safety of look-alike and sound-alike (LASA) medications.**

- MM.6.1 There is a multidisciplinary policy and procedure on handling look- alike/sound-alike (LASA) medications.
- MM.6.2 The hospital reviews and revises annually its list of confusing drug names, which include LASA medication name pairs that the hospital stores, dispenses, and administers.
- MM.6.3 The hospital takes actions to prevent errors involving LASA medications including the following, as applicable:
  - MM.6.3.1 Providing education on LASA medications to healthcare professionals at orientation and as part of continuing education.
  - MM.6.3.2 Using both the brand and generic names for prescribing LASA medications.
  - MM.6.3.3 Writing the diagnosis/ indication of the LASA medication on the prescription.
  - MM.6.3.4 Changing the appearance of look-alike product package.
  - MM.6.3.5 Reading carefully the label each time a medication is accessed, and/or prior to administration.
  - MM.6.3.6 Minimizing the use of verbal and telephone orders.
  - MM.6.3.7 Checking the purpose/indication of the medication on the prescription prior to dispensing and administering.
  - MM.6.3.8 Placing LASA medications in locations separate from each other or in non-alphabetical order.

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**Standard Intent:**

Medication errors related to look-alike and/or sound-alike medication names and/or packages are common in the healthcare setting throughout the medication use process. Look-alike, Sound-alike medications account for an estimated 25- 30% of medication errors. With tens of thousands of medications currently on the market, the potential for serious error due to confusing medication names is significant. Contributing to this confusion are incomplete knowledge of drug names; newly available products; similar packaging or labeling; similar clinical use; illegible prescriptions or misunderstanding during issuing of verbal orders. Several organizations worldwide such as the WHO and the ISMP had identified, published and periodically updated several lists of look-alike and sound-alike medications. Hospitals shall initiate and then annually update their own list of LASA medication names. They



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should establish scientific based safety strategies to prevent or minimize errors with these confusing medications.

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**MM.7 The hospital establishes a multidisciplinary pharmacy and therapeutics committee or equivalent to provide oversight of the hospital formulary and medication use.**

MM.7.1 There is a pharmacy and therapeutics committee chaired by a senior medical or pharmaceutical care staff member.

MM.7.2 There are terms of reference for the pharmacy and therapeutics committee that include committee's functions, membership, quorum, frequency of meetings, approval, and distribution of minutes.

MM.7.3 The pharmacy and therapeutics committee meets on a regular basis (at least quarterly).

MM.7.4 The meeting minutes of the committee reflects the members in attendance, items discussed, decisions reached, lead accountability assigned for action undertaken and subsequent reporting, as well as follow-up data for these activities.

MM.7.5 Functions of the pharmacy and therapeutics committee include, but are not limited to, the following:

MM.7.5.1 Serve in an evaluative, educational, and advisory capacity to the medical staff and hospital management in all matters pertaining to the use of medications.

MM.7.5.2 Develop and approve criteria for selecting medications that include at least indications, effectiveness, risks (potential for medication errors, abuse potential, and sentinel events), or cost.

MM.7.5.3 Develop a formulary of drugs accepted for use in the hospital and provide for its constant revision.

MM.7.5.4 Establish programs and procedures that help ensure safe and effective drug therapy.

MM.7.5.5 Establish programs and procedures that help ensure cost-effective drug therapy.

MM.7.5.6 Establish or plan suitable educational programs for the hospital's professional staff on matters related to drug use.

MM.7.5.7 Participate in quality improvement activities related to distribution, administration, and use of medications.

MM.7.5.8 Monitor and evaluate adverse drug events and make appropriate recommendations to prevent their recurrence.

MM.7.5.9 Establish evidence-based therapeutic guidelines according to the scope of services of the hospital (e.g., intravenous iron,