

error-prone abbreviations and dose expressions. To promote patient safety, the *Recommendations for Terminology, Abbreviations and Symbols used in Medicines Documentation* sets out principles for safe, clear and consistent terminology for medicines, and safe terms, abbreviations and dose designations for medicines.

Abbreviations and terminology as safety issues

Medication errors are one of the most commonly reported clinical incidents in acute health care settings. Rates of serious harm are low, but many medication errors are preventable.

An abbreviation, term or symbol used by a prescriber may mean something quite different to the person interpreting the medicine order.

Abbreviations that appear unclear, ambiguous or incomplete may be misunderstood. When combined with other words or numerals, it may appear as something completely unintended. These terminologies are error-prone and are a critical patient safety issue.

Under review

Recommendations for terminology, abbreviations and symbols used in medicines documentation

2016 | Publication, report or update



Recommendations for terminology, abbreviations and symbols used in medicines documentation - Summary sheet

2016 | Publication, report or update



was led by Dr Magda Raban. The Rapid literature review proposes several changes:

- Enhance the differentiation between application within the paper-based versus digital environments
- Ensure the scope with respect to digital devices is clear
- Include additional examples of abbreviations and symbols to avoid
- Expand the guidance related to abbreviations and terminology for modified-release medicines
- Include advice on risk assessment when deviating from the Commission's *Recommendations for terminology, abbreviations and symbols used in medicines and documentation* (2016 Publication).

The findings from the Rapid literature review will inform the review of the 2016 Publication in consultation with key stakeholders.

Recommendations for terminology, abbreviations and symbols used in medicines documentation: A Rapid Literature Review

2023 | Publication, report or update



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