



Nurse Competencies To Administer Cytotoxic Therapy Procedure

Procedure Number

CHC-CYT-006

Version Nos:

4

1. Purpose

This Procedure outlines the process for ensuring that West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB) staff members responsible for Cytotoxic drug administration procedures have an accredited level of training, have attained proficiency prior to undertaking this, and are IV certified.

2. Application

This Procedure is to be followed by all clinical staff throughout the WCDHB.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this Procedure:

Cytotoxic medications is taken to mean toxic compounds known to have carcinogenic, mutagenic and/or teratogenic potential.

Oncology Nurse Specialist is an oncology trained nurse who is available to act as a resource for medical and nursing staff regarding the administration and management of Cytotoxic medications.

4. Responsibilities

For the purposes of this Procedure:

all **Clinical Staff** are required to:

- provide cares and treatments as per the requirements of this Procedure
- document all observations and cares and treatments given

5. Resources Required

This Procedure requires:

- i) Cytotoxic Medication
- ii) Patient's Clinical Record

6. Process

- 1.00 Nurses administering IV Cytotoxic therapy will have fulfilled the required modules, and completed theoretical competence based assessment, available from Canterbury DHB, in order to be credentialled in the administration of Cytotoxic agents.
- 1.01 Each nurse has a professional duty to maintain competence and ensure that that competence reflects new knowledge and practice as it applies.
- 1.02 The Director of Nursing will maintain a Cytotoxic register of all nurses competent in the administration of Cytotoxic agents.
- 1.03 Re-credentialling of nurses is to be undertaken two yearly. Nurses are required to complete a written test and demonstrate clinical competency as part of the re-credentialling process.
- 1.04 All nurses administering Cytotoxic drugs are trained in the following aspects of Cytotoxic drug handling and demonstrate competency prior to commencing duties.



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- 1.05 Competency is to be demonstrated in the following:
- i) Potential occupational hazards.
 - ii) The proper use of protective equipment and materials.
 - iii) Cytotoxic drug knowledge, including known risks and nursing management of side effects and toxicity.
 - iv) Relevant techniques and procedures for handling and administration.
 - v) Waste containment and handling.
 - vi) Spill management.
- 1.06 Nurses administering Cytotoxic agents are to be made aware of the potential risks involved in administering such agents by the relevant Clinical Nurse Leader. This will be achieved through the education given during the Cytotoxic credentialing course.
- 1.07 All casual nurses deployed to areas using Cytotoxic agents must be informed at the beginning of their duty in the area of the potential risks and the safety guidelines for handling and disposal of waste.
- 1.08 Pregnant or breast feeding nurses who feel comfortable with the information and guidelines for safety should be allowed to administer Cytotoxic agents.
- 1.09 Nurses who are pregnant or breast feeding who do not feel comfortable with contact with Cytotoxic agents, must be aware that this will have an impact on the working of the ward/unit. This may mean they will be offered alternative duties in an area where they will not be exposed to these agents.
- 1.10 Nurses should wear latex gloves and a disposable gown when handling excreta of a patient who has received Cytotoxic agents in the past 48 hours. Both gowns and gloves must be disposed of after each use. Personnel should wear protective eyewear if splashing is likely. All body fluids are considered potentially hazardous and should not be handled without the proper protection.

7. Precautions And Considerations

- ➔ Nurses administering IV Cytotoxic therapy must be credentialled in the administration of Cytotoxic agents.
- ➔ The Director of Nursing will maintain a Cytotoxic register of all competent nurses
- ➔ Nurses administering Cytotoxic agents are to be made aware of the potential risks involved in administering such agents by the relevant Clinical Nurse Leader.

8. References

Department of Labour, 1977 Occupational Safety and Health Guidelines for the Safe Handling of Cytotoxic Drugs and Related Waste.

Brant, J. 1995 Is it safe for pregnant nurses to be exposed to chemotherapy agents? ONS News 10 (3), 5



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Oncology Nursing Society, 1996 Cancer Chemotherapy Guidelines & Recommendations for Practice.

The Cytotoxics Handbook, 1997, 3rd Edition, Radcliffe Medical Press.

N.Z. Pharmacist's Association, 1991 Oncology Pharmacy Practice Manual.

Canterbury DHB Policy and Procedure Manuel, Christchurch Hospital Vol F Fluid and Medication Management Section15

9. Related Documents

WCDHB Oncology/Cytotoxic Procedure

Revision History	Version:	4
	Developed By:	Oncology Nurse Specialist
	Authorised By:	Chief Medical Advisor/GM - Operations
	Date Authorised:	December 2004
	Date Last Reviewed:	October 2008
	Date Of Next Review:	October 2010