

Administration of Oral Systemic Therapy for Cancer

A Quick Reference for Long Term Care Charge Nurses

Oral systemic therapy for cancer is **HIGH RISK** medication and therefore must be prepared, administered and handled according to specific guidelines.¹

It is recommended that oral systemic therapy for cancer only be administered by nurses knowledgeable about the drug, cytotoxic precautions, management of expected toxicities and other care required by oncology patients.

Registered Nurses should be responsible for the administration of oral systemic therapy in the instances of:

- Administration of first cycles
- Administration of doses if new toxicities are identified and/or doses require modification
- Administration of clinical trial drugs
- Administration of drugs to patients with unstable clinical status or unpredictable outcomes

When a resident of a long term care facility is prescribed oral systemic therapy for cancer, the Charge Nurse should:

1. Print and review the [Quick Reference for Nurses](#) and place it on the client's chart.
2. Print and review the appropriate [Medication Information Sheet](#); place it on the client's chart.
3. Print and review your Facility's [Safe Handling Policy](#); place it on the client's chart.
4. Print and review Cytotoxic [Precautions at Home: a Guide for Patients and Families](#); place it on the client's chart.
5. Ensure the appropriate [personal protective equipment](#) and cytotoxic precaution [signage](#) is available for nurses administering the medication.
6. Ensure the nurses who will administer the medication review the Quick Reference for Nurses, the Medication Information Sheet, Cytotoxic Precautions at Home booklet prior to administering the medication.
7. Ensure that support staff is knowledgeable about cytotoxic precautions practices and that appropriate personal protective equipment is available. This includes those cleaning the client's room, or handling waste and soiled laundry.

Nurses in Long Term Care Facilities who administer oral systemic therapy for cancer are encouraged to review the resources in *Cancer Care Nova Scotia's* [Oral Systemic Therapy for Cancer Toolkit for Nurses](#).

¹ Cancer Care Nova Scotia (CCNS). (2014). Oral Systemic Therapy for Cancer Standards of Practice. Halifax, Nova Scotia: Province of Nova Scotia

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For additional information or to arrange an in-service for staff please contact your clinical nurse educator or designated Oncology Practice Consultant:

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