



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Division of Medical Assistance
600 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02111
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MASSHEALTH
TRANSMITTAL LETTER NF-48
November 2003

TO: Nursing Facilities Participating in MassHealth
FROM: Beth Waldman, Acting Commissioner *Beth Waldman*
RE: *Nursing Facility Manual (Unit-Dose Return for Certain Drugs)*

In an effort to reduce pharmaceutical waste in nursing facilities, the Division implemented in July 2002 a unit-dose return requirement of certain drugs for nursing facilities and pharmacies. (See 130 CMR 456.621.) Under these regulations, the nursing facility must return to the dispensing pharmacy certain unused unit-dose-packaged drugs that were dispensed to MassHealth members. The Division is expanding the number of drugs that are to be a part of the program from eight to 29.

Department of Public Health Guidelines

The Department of Public Health has issued two documents about unit-dose dispensing and return:

- Policy on Return for Redispensing of Medications from Long Term Care Facilities
- Guidelines for Use of Unit-Dose Packaging for the Management and Administration of Pharmaceuticals in Long Term Care Facilities.

Nursing facilities must adhere to these guidelines when returning drugs in unit-dose packaging. Please refer to Department of Public Health guidelines and "Best Practices" guidelines that were issued within Transmittal Letter NF-43, dated June 2002.

Best Practices

The Division, in concert with nursing facility and pharmacy stakeholders, has also prepared "Best Practices" guidelines. These guidelines advise nursing facilities and pharmacies on how to best manage the unit-dose return policy described in the attached regulations. Please refer to Department of Public Health guidelines and "Best Practices" guidelines that were issued with Transmittal Letter NF-43, dated June 2002.

These changes are effective January 1, 2004.

NEW MATERIAL

(The pages listed here contain new or revised language.)

Nursing Facilities Manual

Pages F-1 and F-2

OBSOLETE MATERIAL

(The pages listed here are no longer in effect.)

Nursing Facilities Manual

Pages F-1 and F-2 — transmitted by Transmittal Letter NF-43

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Medical Assistance Provider Manual Series NURSING FACILITY MANUAL	SUBCHAPTER NUMBER AND TITLE APPENDIX F: UNIT-DOSE DRUGS	PAGE F-1
	TRANSMITTAL LETTER NF-48	DATE 01/01/04

Unit-Dose Drugs

This appendix lists the unit-dose-packaged drugs that a nursing facility must return to the dispensing pharmacy in accordance with 130 CMR 456.621, when the use of the drug for the member is discontinued. Beside each drug is the minimum quantity of the doses of the drug acceptable for return.

Drug	Minimum Quantity
Actonel	3
Aricept	3
Avandia	3
Celebrex	3
Celexa	3
Depakote	3
Detrol LA	3
DuoNeb	3
Effexor	3
Fosamax	3
Fragmin	1
Lamictal	3
Levaquin	3
Lipitor	3
Lovenox	1
Neurontin	3
Norvasc	3
Paxil	3
Prevacid	3
Plavix	3
Protonix	3
Remeron	3
Reminyl	3
Risperdal	3
Rocephin	1
Seroquel	3
Wellbutrin SR	3
Zoloft	3
Zyprexa	3

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Medical Assistance Provider Manual Series NURSING FACILITY MANUAL	SUBCHAPTER NUMBER AND TITLE APPENDIX F: UNIT-DOSE DRUGS	PAGE F-2
	TRANSMITTAL LETTER NF-48	DATE 01/01/04

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