

Appendix 1 Definitions of direct care, medication-related tasks and professional communication

Direct care Any activity directly related to patient care	
Includes	Excludes
<p>Doctors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admitting a patient • Examining/reviewing a patient • Performing medical procedures • Assisting other staff with procedure • Escorting a patient • Communicating with patient or relative • Taking a history <p>Nurses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bathing • Nursing procedures eg catheterisation • Assisting doctor with procedure • Making pt comfortable • Transporting pt • Communicating with pt/rel • Bed-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medication related activities • Documenting • Reviewing documentation or results • Planning care • Communicating with staff member <p>Note: All communication with patient/relative is defined as direct care</p> <p>When a doctor or nurse is discussing medications with a patient (eg. as part of history taking and review), this is defined as a medication related activity</p>

Professional Communication Any work-related discussion with another staff member	
Includes	Excludes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requesting medical or nursing consultation or review • Planning care with any health professional • Handover/parts of a ward round 	<p>Medication related discussion with patient or relative</p> <p>Social discussion</p>

Medication-Related Tasks	
Any activity that relates to medication for a particular patient	
Find Order	
Includes	Excludes
looking for medication charts/medical records with drug order	Looking for notes in general
Prescribe Drug	
Includes	Excludes
Writing a new order Changing orders Giving a verbal order Writing discharge scripts Obtaining drug authority numbers	Re-writing orders (eg re-writing due to legibility issues, requires signature etc) following a request for clarification (see clarify)
Transcribe Order	
Includes	Excludes
Copying medication orders from one medication chart to a new medication chart	Re-writing orders (eg re-writing due to legibility issues, requires signature etc) following a request for clarification (see clarify)
Preparing drug	
Activity around drug preparation & clean-up	
Includes	Excludes
Finding drug or reconstitution fluid or Selection of appropriate equipment for preparation and administration Locating drug keys Preparing the drug eg reconstitution, drawing up solution, crushing tablets, preparing nebulizers Commencement and removal of IV infusions, cannulation, rearranging and disconnecting tubing for the purpose of drug administration Returning/disposing equipment &/or drug following administration Dangerous drugs (eg narcotics) counting & drug register entry for individual patients Checking the drug with other staff (when the doctor/nurse who is being observed is the clinician responsible for the drug)	

<p>Clarify Action taken when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> asked to clarify an order that has been previously written, OR asking another doctor to clarify an order, OR seeking drug information for clarification (e.g. when prescribing) 	
<p>Includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-writing a drug order due to illegibility or legal reasons Checking the particular drug details in drug information source Asking another health professional about the drug order Clarifying with the patient about the drug order 	<p>Excludes</p> <p>Discussion around a drug choice or dosage (see medication discussion)</p>
<p>Check drug Checking with & co-signing of a nurse's or another doctor's medication</p>	
<p>Includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests for dangerous drug (eg narcotics) drug checks for individual patients Witnessing any other medication for another health professional, eg IV 	<p>Excludes</p> <p>Asking another nurse or doctor to check a drug that the observed doctor/nurse wants to give (see prep drug)</p>
<p>Administering a drug and recording drug administration Administering drug to patient</p>	
<p>Includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checking patient identification band &/or order &/or drug label Any patient preparation, eg sitting patient up so they can swallow medication Reviewing &/or taking &/or documenting vital signs as part of the protocol before giving the medication (eg pulse prior to digoxin) Checking &/or adjusting IV admin throughout the process, eg returning to the patient & checking tubing, drip rate etc. Documenting on medication order in notes 	<p>Excludes</p> <p>Co-signing (see check drug) Drug register (see prep drug or check drug)</p>
<p>Discuss medication Talking about a drug with another health professional &/or patient/relative</p>	
<p>Includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify choice of drug or dosage or side effects Discharge education Discuss efficacy Discuss administration protocols 	<p>Excludes</p> <p>Clarification of an order (see clarify) Requests for re-writing of order due to illegibility (see clarify)</p>
<p>Review Looking over drug orders as part of planning care</p>	