

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Document Owner: Director, HIM & Privacy Officer | Reviewed By: Patient Care Documentation Committee, Medical Record Committee | Approved By: NMHC Officer's Staff |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|

SCOPE

This Policy and Procedure applies to:
 Ambulance Services
 Clinic Services
 Home and Community Services
 North Memorial Medical Center

POLICY

To avoid misinterpretation and improper usage of terms, the use of abbreviations is discouraged in all documentation. When abbreviations are used, be sure they are decipherable and clearly meaningful in the context of the documentation.

This policy lists UNACCEPTABLE abbreviations, those abbreviations that may not be used in any combination/variation.

Clinical Laboratory abbreviations are as generated/defined by the laboratory information system. Abbreviated references to specific units/departments and references to other health care facilities are permitted.

Documenters are approved to use, with their signature and title, standard abbreviations denoting degrees earned.

Generally, standard measurements abbreviations, chemical symbols, obvious word shortenings and common symbols are acceptable unless specified otherwise.

PROCEDURE

1. If abbreviations from the unacceptable list are used in the writing of orders, the order will not be accepted and the documenter will be contacted to clarify the order.
2. If unacceptable abbreviations are identified in direct entered notes or flowsheets the documenter will be contacted.
3. If anyone reviewing a chart encounters an unclear abbreviation, the documenter will be contacted to explain the abbreviation. The reviewer may consult with any references that define abbreviations.

UNACCEPTABLE ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| IU | International Unit |
| MgSO₄ | Magnesium sulfate |
| MS | Morphine Sulfate, Magnesium Sulfate |
| MSO₄ | Morphine Sulfate |
| q.d., QD | Daily/once a day, every day |
| q.o.d., QOD | Every other day |
| u | Units |

Decimal errors CAN cause 10-fold dosing errors!

| REQUIRED Practice | POTENTIAL ERROR |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Use leading zeros like this: 0.1 not .1 | Using ".1" can be misread as " 1 " |
| Don't use trailing zeros "1" not "1.0" | Using trailing zeros can be misread 1.0 may become 10 |