ADVERSE DRUG REACTIONS

POLICY:
Any response to a medication with specific signs and symptoms not directly associated with that drug is defined as an adverse drug reaction. When a patient has any unusual reaction to a drug, the staff person shall immediately initiate first aid measures. Significant signs and symptoms that are to be responded to, and reported to the pharmacist, supervisor and physician include the following:

- Central nervous system: headache, tremors, dizziness, muscle spasm, confusion;
- Gastrointestinal: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, cramps, abdominal pain;
- Skin: rash, flushing
- Cardiovascular: dizziness, hypotension, arrhythmia, tachycardia, bradycardia; and
- Respiratory: shortness of breath, dyspnea on exertion, respiratory depression.

PROCEDURE:

1. The nurse is to stop the administration of the medication immediately. Assess the patient’s respiratory status, note integumentary changes, other changes from baseline, and vital signs. Note the availability of an anaphylaxis kit in the client home, and administer ordered medications if the parameters have been met.

2. The nurse shall contact the patient’s attending physician to provide information and obtain orders.

3. If the patient’s physician cannot be reached and the patient is deemed to be in immediate danger of anaphylaxis, the nurse shall arrange for transportation, following the emergency plan, to the nearest hospital emergency room. Transportation may include police, fire or ambulance service.
4. Notify the Nursing Supervisor or on-call supervisor of the adverse drug reaction.

5. Notify the pharmacist of the adverse drug reaction. The pharmacist will follow his/her policy on adverse drug reaction response.


7. The supervisor will forward the written report to the director. The director will review all Risk Management reports daily and will initiate any corrective actions judged necessary. The director will also report to the president any significant incidents, and any others he/she feels should be reported.

8. Risk Management reports will be reviewed quarterly by the Risk Management Committee to identify trends and recommend corrective actions.

9. The Risk Management Committee will aggregate the reports to identify trends and patterns. Information from this analysis will be forwarded to the Quality Improvement Committee for performance improvement purposes and inclusion in the QI Plan. This information will also be shared with Policy and Procedure Committee for action to revise or develop new agency standards.