



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Office of Health Care Quality

Spring Grove Center • Bland Bryant Building

55 Wade Avenue • Catonsville, Maryland 21228-4663

Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – John M. Colmers, Secretary

To: Administrators of Comprehensive and Extended Care Facilities

From: Nancy Grimm, RN, JD – Director *NBG*

Date: December 15, 2009

Re: Administration of Medications for Leave of Absence of 24 Hours or Less

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Recently the Office of Health Care Quality has received several questions related to the rights of residents to access their medications during a short term leave of absence. This transmittal is being sent to remind you that C.O.M.A.R. 10.07.02.15G, which became effective on September 22, 2008, requires nursing facilities to take the following actions:

(1) A facility shall develop policies and procedures to ensure that a resident or, if the resident lacks capacity, the resident's family or other person accompanying the resident is informed, both orally and in writing, on how the resident must safely and correctly take the resident's medications during a short-term leave of absence of 24 hours or less.

(2) A licensed nurse shall prepare, in accordance with a facility-developed procedure, medications to be sent with a resident on short-term leave from the facility of 24 hours or less.

The intent of this regulation is to provide residents with the flexibility to leave the facility while still safely receiving their necessary medications. It was developed with input from numerous stakeholders including those working in nursing facilities, advocacy groups, the Maryland Board of Nursing and the Maryland Board of Pharmacy. Please share this information with pertinent staff including your Director of Nurses, Medical Director and Consultant Pharmacist. Questions should be directed to William Vaughan RN, Chief Nurse at (410) 402-8140 or wvaughan@dhhm.state.md.us

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