

**Disposal of Medications in the Home**

<b>Federal Regulations:</b> 418.106(e)	<b>Effective Date:</b> February 2014
<b>State Regulations:</b> CA Article 6, Section 6.2	<b>Revision Date(s):</b>

**PURPOSE:** To ensure controlled substances and other prescription medications are disposed of in a safe manner in the home environment.

**POLICY:** The Hospice nurse advises the destruction of all prescription medications when a medication is no longer needed by the patient or in the event of the patient's death at home.

**PROCEDURE:**

- 1) When a patient no longer needs a prescription medication or upon the death of the patient in the home, the nurse educates the patient and or caregiver to dispose of the medication.
- 2) If the caregiver refuses a visit after the patient's death and/or the disposal of controlled medications, the nurse:
  - a) Documents this refusal in the patient record;
  - b) Informs the clinical manager/ designee;
  - c) Explains disposal methods to the caregiver.
- 3) If a nurse is not available at the time of death, other professional hospice staff members recommend that the family destroy all medications. This is documented in the clinical record.
- 4) If the patient resides in a nursing facility (NF), medications are destroyed per the NF policy.
- 5) Medications are not transferred to other patients and are not removed from the residence by the hospice staff.
- 6) When controlled drugs are first ordered, the Hospice provides a copy of this policy to the patient and caregiver.
  - a) The nurse educates the patient and/or caregiver regarding the safe use and disposal of controlled drugs.
  - b) The clinical record reflects the documentation that this policy was provided and discussed.