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Elements of a Prescription

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Elements of a Prescription

Prescriptions are done by a healthcare professional such as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN), and they include the prescribed medicines and the instructions of how the patient is supposed to take their medication. The prescription elements include information of the prescriber by writing their contact information, and that of the patient, the medicines being prescribed. Signatura is also an element that provides the patients' instructions on how to take the prescribed drugs, for example, take one tablet orally every 4 hours.

After the Signatura is the dispensing instructions, which helps the pharmacists know the type of medicine they are supposed to dispense to the patient, the APRN should write the amount of medication the pharmacist should dispense to the patient to prevent the risk of medical error. For example, the APRN should write 30 (Thirty) tablets for clarification. The number of refills is also an element of prescription as it clarifies the number of times the nurse would want the patient to use a particular type of medication by refilling the prescription. The final element of prescription is the signature of the prescriber, which shows that a certain APRN is prescribed to a particular patient for recording keeping.

The Drug Enforcement Administration number (DEA) is considered as a number used to identify a healthcare practitioner, which permits them to provide prescriptions. Hence, the DEA can track which healthcare practitioner has prescribed to a certain patient, and it also controls and monitors the prescription of controlled substances (Moradi & Shademanfar, 2016). Without the authorized DEA number, medical practitioners, such as the APRN's, are at risk of losing their medical practice license and criminal investigation. Therefore, to protect their DEA number from being used by other healthcare practitioners, they should register with the program for monitoring the prescription of controlled substances, which will help them in tracking the usage

of their DEA number by using a database. Secondly, they should continuously check their credit reports for any strange behavior registered under their personal information. This will help them know if their DEA number has been breached. Thirdly, healthcare practitioners with DEA numbers should use inventory pads or watermark pads since they are considered difficult to replicate. For example, when a patient comes in for refills and the APRN who usually gives her refills is unavailable at the time, an unauthorized individual, like medical assistance, can replicate the DEA number of the APRN and prescribe the medicine to the patient. This means that if the patient developed problems due to the medicine provided, the APRN would face legal accusations or even lose their medical license due to replicating their DEA number.

Many errors have been recorded when it comes to prescription. Some of these errors include delaying or omitting prescribed medicines. This error has been recorded to have caused severe harm and death in 2017. The actions used to minimize this error is reviewing and identifying the continuity and timelines of medicine administration and its significance. Another intervention is ensuring the reconciliation of effective medications when admitting and discharging patients from the hospital (Compton et al., 2020). The second error is administering anticoagulants, which have been known to cause severe harm and even death to the patients. To minimize this risk, procedures for prescription should be reviewed by medication and medical history, interactions, weight, age, and blood tests. The hospitals should also put in place procedures that will be used to double-check prescribing formats or systems. Finally, patients should be trained and taught how to take their anticoagulants effectively and safely. They should also be taught about the anticoagulants' side effects and to visit the clinic regularly to minimize the risk.

References

- Crompton, A., Gell, J., & Hooley, J. (2020). The top ten prescribing errors in practice and how to avoid them. *Evaluation*, 14, 34.
- Moradi, F., & Shademanfar, M. R. (2016). The Legal Responsibility of Nurses in Administration of Prescriptions. *J. Pol. & L.*, 9, 174.

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