

# Information for Patient and Families

## Patient Safety and Medication Reconciliation



UHN

Patients and healthcare professionals can partner together to ensure medications are used safely and appropriately. When we work together, we can prevent medication errors and mistakes from happening.

### What is Medication Reconciliation?

“Medication Reconciliation” is a formal process to ensure that medications are appropriately assessed when patients move from one healthcare setting to another (for example, being admitted to hospital from home). To do this properly, patients and family members are essential partners to ensure we have the correct and complete medication history. This medication list is then compared to prescribed medications in hospital to identify and resolve any differences with the healthcare team.

### When is Medication Reconciliation Done?

- When patients are admitted or discharged from hospital.
- When patients are transferred between certain hospital wards
- When patients visit certain outpatient clinics

### How can You Help? Tips for Patients (adapted from ISMP: [www.ismp.org](http://www.ismp.org))

#### Make a list of medications you are taking

- Name, dose, how often you take them
- Change and update your list regularly
- List your medication, food allergies, over the counter (non-prescription) medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements or herbal products

#### 2. Take your medications or a list of your medications when you go to the hospital or visit clinics

- Healthcare professionals will need to know what you are taking
- Tell your health care professionals you want to know the names of each medication and the reasons you are taking them

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- This way you will know to ask questions which may prevent errors
  - Look at all medicines before you take them
  - Ensure that healthcare professionals check your hospital identification bracelet before they give you medications
- 3. Discharge Medication Review**
- When you are ready to go home, have a doctor, nurse or pharmacist review the medications with you.
- 4. Take your medication list to every doctor's visit**
- Ask your doctor to explain what is written on any prescription, including the drug name and how often you should take them
  - Tell your doctor you want the purpose of the medication written on the prescription
    - Knowing the purpose allows you and your pharmacist to double check and avoid look alike drug names
  - Advise healthcare professionals about any samples
    - Will allow checks for drug interactions
- 5. Keep medications in their original containers at home**
- Many pills look alike-read the label every time you take a dose to double check
  - Store medications where children can't reach them
  - Don't chew, crush or break capsules unless instructed