

Department of Developmental Services

May 20, 2020

Medication Administration Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. If an employee's med admin certification card expires during the time period March 1, 2020 through June 1, 2020, and the time period for recertification is being extended by 90-days from the expiration date, does this mean that employees will be permitted to administer medications with an expired med cert card?**

Yes, per the Medication Administration Guidance memo released on 3/17/2020, anyone whose DDS med certification (cert) has expired or will be expiring during the time period from March 1, 2020 through June 1, 2020, has been extended for 90-days from the date of the employee's current med cert expiration. Extended meaning, he/she may administer meds until the new calculated expiration date (90-days from the expiration date on the employee's medication certification card). Please use the leap year calendar that was provided as an attachment to that document to calculate the new date. These documents may be located under the section "Clinical Guidance" using the DDS website link below:

<https://portal.ct.gov/DDS/General/COVID19/COVID-19-Updates-for-DDS-Providers>

- 2. How will new employees become med admin certified?**

During the Covid-19 pandemic there is an online course (linked below) that your chosen employees can be referred to on the DDS site. If the employee has an active application or an application in process, they will be allowed to test once they have completed the online content and had it verified by their med coordinator. Testing will continue to require an approved application on the e-license site.

<https://portal.ct.gov/DDS/EducationalSupport/Medication-Administration/medadmin-elearning>

- 3. Will there be an additional extension for employees who need to be recertified?**

Yes, there are two different extensions.

- If your employee's certification falls in the original time frame March 1st – June 1st – All of those employees will have an additional 30 days. If your expiration date was March 1st the new expiration date would be June 28th
- All employees expiring between June 2nd – June 30th will have an additional 90 days. If you employee expires June 2nd they will have until August 30th
- Please be advised staff must have their new Medication Administration Certification card to pass meds. Example if your extension goes through June 28th if you have not received your new card by then you MAY NOT PASS MEDS, on June 29th. Please start completing the recertification process, which includes Checklist A & B, recert review, and the exam, as soon as you can.

Department of Developmental Services

4. When completing an initial application on E-license for the ONLINE COURSE which option do I chose?

Choose Option A. If your employee has an approved application with Option B, please contact the DDS Med Admin office to have it revised.

5. If my employee is currently approved for an in person 21-hour Med Admin course, can they take the online course?

Yes, as long as they have a current, unexpired application.

6. Are the initial Exams limited to the Cheshire location?

Yes, during the Covid-19 “Stay Safe Stay Home” Orders, the DDS Cheshire Office will be the only location at this time.

7. How are onsite practicums to be completed if we are to maintain social distancing?

To maintain social distancing, the delegating nurse should wear a mask and stand 6 feet away and observe the employee. The employee is also required to wear a face mask and should be verbalizing everything that he/she is doing. If the delegating nurse is unable to get into the house due to safety concerns during this COVID-19 Pandemic, the nurse may choose to complete the onsite Practicum remotely providing she/he can securely view the process in its entirety. The nurse will then sign & date Checklist B & A (if completed at the same time). The nurse will need to note on the form that the onsite practicum was completed remotely. The form shall be sent electronically to the employee for him/her to sign and date the document.

8. Will virtual Med Admin recertification classes be offered?

At this time, multiple options for recertification classes and exams are being reviewed but no decisions have been finalized.

9. Is there an annual nursing delegation and basic health extension?

If the delegating nurse is unable to get into the house due to safety concerns during this COVID-19 Pandemic, both the annual nursing delegation form & basic health form will be extended for 90 days if needed. If the nurse feels like there is a need to do the training for the employee and is unable to get into the home, then it can be completed remotely. The delegating nurse must be able to use some type of secure visual technology, to observe the employee during the training and/or return demonstration of delegated tasks.

Department of Developmental Services

10. What is the current plan for CPR?

DDS Staff Development plans to pilot a hybrid CPR course initially with Public Programs staff and then expand to others. Both the CPR lecture and testing will be completed online. Practicum will be done in small groups maintaining social distancing and with each student provided with his/her own manikin.

2-person BLS - Will be completed with the instructor and the use of a bag-valve-mask will be utilized.

11. What is the current plan for PMT training?

Staff Development is working on PMT hybrid training with PMT associates; PMT principles will be taught virtually, with small group sessions limited to 5 people for demonstration, practicum, and testing. This training has an anticipated start date of 6/1/2020.

12. What is happening with 21-hour Med courses that were interrupted due to Covid-19?

The Med Coordinator shall submit the employee's name and location of the course to DDS.medadmin@ct.gov for further instructions. Employees will not be required to retake the course in its entirety if they complete the process within 6 months.

13. Will it be a requirement to complete Checklist B during a remote retraining session for Class B Med errors?

Yes, if on-site retraining for Class B Med errors is not feasible and the nurse is retraining remotely, it is a requirement to complete Checklist B for anyone who has committed a Class B Med error. This may not currently be what is practiced now however, remote retraining is not the normal practice and is being permitted during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is an added safeguard to maintain that the employee is performing at the highest level of accuracy when administering medications. The way for the delegating RN to assure the highest level of accuracy is by Checklist B being completed.

14. Is DDS considering allowing "Pill Packet" (multidose med pack) use to reduce the burden on med cert employees?

The use of pill packets/multidose med packs are being considered for use by med certified staff; however, it is not without risks. DDS has been and continues to review multiple concerns, seek resolution, and plan for nursing oversight and best practice issues. Multidose med packs have been utilized for several years by individuals who self-administer medications. The current COVID-19 pandemic is not the ideal time to convert to multidose med packs, because the process requires a significant amount of time and energy commitments on the part of the delegating nurse and the pharmacist; therefore, this is not something which can be done hurriedly. The potential for pharmacy

Department of Developmental Services

errors may be more likely during the transition process and with frequent medication changes. DDS has not been informed of significant challenges specific to medication administration subsequent to COVID-19.