**Delivery/Shipping of Medication**

**Section:** Pharmacy Operations

**Compliance:** URAC Specialty Pharmacy 2.1

**URAC Standards:** PHARM-OP 6

**ACHC Standards:** DRX5-11B

**Policy ID:** 7.6

**Approved by:**

**POLICY**

<insert practice name> ensures that quality pharmaceutical product is received by the patient in a timely manner under controlled conditions.

**PROCEDURE**

1. The pharmacist will determine, upon receipt of an order or a refill, the degree of need. This will be assessed by:
* The extent of the patient’s illness;
* The quantity of medication the patient possesses;
* Additional prescriber input
1. <insert practice name> utilizes company employed couriers for most deliveries (90% or more). In the event that a delivery cannot be made by an <insert practice name> courier then a third party overnight delivery service is utilized.
2. Based on manufacturer’s recommendations, temperature-sensitive medications are to be shipped in approved insulated containers with sufficient artificial ice and expedited (next day) delivery to maintain product integrity. Sufficient artificial ice is based on the manufacture product stability guideline with consideration of seasonal temperature and geographical location. In addition, the manufacture of the artificial ice’s temperature stability ranges specification is taken into account. All medications shipped are done using a next day service. All medications that <insert practice name> ships that require refrigeration are stable for at least 24 hours at room temperature. The goal is to keep the medication cold during shipment, but maintaining the cold chain is not necessary. In either case, the patient will be advised of and consent to the anticipated delivery date prior to shipment. Temperature monitoring devices will be utilized in order to confirm that temperature sensitive medications are maintained at either the manufacturer’s recommended storage range or room temperature during the shipping process. **[PHARM-OP 6 (b, c)]**
3. Shipping processes are tested quarterly for effectives and results are reviewed by Quality Management Committee.
4. If possible and within reason, the medication will be delivered in conjunction with other product dispensed by <insert practice name>
5. All new patients will be notified of their right to pharmacist counseling. The pharmacist is available to all patients to answer any counseling questions. The pharmacy will maintain a copy of the patient’s signatures, indicating receipt of the medication. The signatures may be obtained through the delivery vendor, on the delivery tickets, and by any written correspondence. **[PHARM-OP 6 (d)]**
6. <insert practice name> has the ability to track products after they leave the facility via the shipping software. The signatures may be obtained through UPS, FedEx or USPS, on the electronic delivery tickets, and by any written correspondence. **[PHARM-OP 6 (d)]**
7. The record of patient signatures shall be maintained in accordance with <insert practice name> policy
8. Should the patient require immediate prescription service, the pharmacist is responsible for assisting the prescriber and/or patient with locating a local pharmacy that can immediately dispense the needed medication. **[PHARM-OP 6 (e, f)]**
9. Patients/Caregivers and prescribers if necessary are proactively alerted when an exception notice is received from USPS, UPS, FedEx, or another carrier. When the alert is received a staff member is selected to make outbound calls to the patients to notify them of the delay. If the delay will result in the medication not being stable when the patient receives the medication the patient will be informed to return the unstable medication and a reship will be processed. If the carrier delay will result in the patient missing a dose of medication the patient will be transferred to the pharmacist for counseling if the medication cannot be found locally for the patient. **[PHARM-OP 6 (e)]**
10. Should the pharmacy staff or patient determine that a package has not arrived within the anticipated delivery window; the pharmacy staff will contact the patient and provider. The pharmacist will use available information from the drug manufacturer to determine if the product integrity has been compromised. If so, the pharmacist will assist the patient with obtaining replacement product through an early refill approval by the payer, through manufacturer product replacement or through product replacement by <insert practice name>. **[PHARM-OP 6 (f)]**
11. <insert practice name> is committed to providing its patient with accurate shipping of their medications, supplies and educational materials.
12. The delivery address is also cross checked against the shipping vendor’s database via the shipping software. <insert practice name> will continually evaluate the effectiveness and accuracy of its shipping through monitoring of timeliness, shipping errors, turnaround time and payment responsibilities. **[PHARM- OP 6 (a)]**
13. <insert practice name> to use tamper evident tape on all packages being shipped through third party delivery service. Tamper evident tape to be placed on sealed edge of box.

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