

	Mental Health and Substance Abuse Bulletin COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA * DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE	
	SUBJECT GENERIC DRUGS	BY  Gerald F. Radke Deputy Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
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SCOPE:

CEO'S, STATE MENTAL HOSPITALS
 ADMINISTRATOR, RESTORATION CENTER

PURPOSE:

OMHSAS Policy on the Use of Generic Drugs

BACKGROUND:

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania policy encourages patients to purchase generic drugs when brand drugs are ordered by a prescribing physician. This policy was adopted in order to permit patients the option of purchasing a less costly, though equally therapeutic drug.

POLICY:

In keeping with this policy, state mental facility physicians and pharmacists should utilize generic drugs for patients in state mental facilities whenever feasible and clinically appropriate. Costly liquid concentrates should be ordered for patients only when there is a documented problem of non-compliance in taking tablet or capsule forms, when there is a documented physical problem that justifies the clinical necessity for prescribing liquid concentrates, when there is a need to treat an agitated patient rapidly, or when hoarding of drugs could lead to attempted suicide or drug trafficking. Furthermore, clinical staff need to inform/educate patients when a switch to generic drugs results in the size, shape and/or color of their prescribed medication changing.

Each facility is expected to develop its own written policy with specific procedures to implement the above. Clear authority and responsibility for monitoring and enforcement of the policy must be identified. The policy and its implementation must be in place by April 1, 2002.

<p>COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:</p> <p>Steve Fiorello, Rh.P., OMHSAS Pharmacy Director (717) 705-8331</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Visit the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse website at www.dpw.state.pa.us/omhsas/dpwmh.asp.</p>
