



Rx Update

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INPATIENT MEDICATION ORDER EXPIRATIONS – HARD AND SOFT STOPS

The UIHC policy and procedure Prescribing Medications for Hospitalized Patients (Inpatients) and Clinic Patients (I.23) has been revised to include hard and soft stops for automatic medication order expiration dates. Medication order durations default to those predefined by the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Subcommittee at the time the order is entered in the Pharmacy Computer System unless otherwise specified by the physician. Medication order duration defaults are separated into “hard stops” and “soft stops.”

Hard Stops

Hard Stops are used for clinical situations where there is a significant potential for adverse effects to occur or other clinically undesirable effects if therapy is continued. A hard stop is a notification to the Licensed Independent Practitioner (LIP) that therapy is discontinuing based on policy and a new order is required to continue therapy. Physicians are notified of the impending expiration of orders via an Expiring Orders Summary (EOS). The EOS is placed on the patient's chart at least 24 hours prior to the assigned expiration date/time. It is important that medication orders be rewritten in a timely manner before the end of their assigned expiration date.

Examples of medications with **hard stops** are:

Drug	Predefined Order Duration
Clozapine (Clozaril [®])	7 days
Coagulation Factor VIIa (NovoSeven [®])	24 hours
Ketorolac injection (Toradol [®])	5 days
Fenoldopam (Corlopan [®])	48 hours
Dexmedetomidine (Precedex [®])	24 hours
Rasburicase injection (Elitek [®])	24 hours
Meperidine injection (Demerol [®])	48 hours

Soft Stops

Soft Stops are used for clinical situations where abruptly discontinuing therapy can adversely affect patient care. A soft stop is a notification to the LIP that therapy has reached a point where discontinuation of therapy should be considered. For “soft stop” medications with order durations of less than three days, there are direct communications from the pharmacist to the LIP to ensure that medications are not continued longer than clinically necessary. For “soft stop” medications with order durations of 3 days or longer, communications are sent to the LIP via IPR. The LIP is presented with a prompt when they access the IPR Progress Notes. If the LIP is responsible for the therapy, the LIP will have the option to discontinue, continue, modify the therapy or defer the decision until specific clinical information is available. The LIP must write an order to discontinue the therapy.

Examples of medications with **soft stops** are:

Drug	Predefined Order Duration
Systemic antibiotics	7 days
Anti-retrovirals	30 days
Anti-tuberculosis medications	30 days
Nesiritide injection (Natrecor [®])	48 hours
Lansoprazole injection (Prevacid [®])	72 hours
All other medications	30 days