MEDICATION ERRORS IN CHEMOTHERAPY: HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR PATIENTS

RISKS FOR STAFF

Potential risk

- Leakage of chemotherapy drugs during application (e.g. when connecting the infusion to the catheter)

- Contamination of surfaces through leakage, spilling or aerosols from container

- Contact with body fluids contaminated with chemotherapy drugs

- Leakage of chemotherapy drugs through stress cracks occurring in medical devices made of incompatible plastic material

Counter measure

- Use appropriate personal protective equipment

- Make sure solid surfaces are cleaned correctly

- Use appropriate personal protective equipment

- Make sure food and drinks are prepared, stored and consumed separately from sites where chemotherapy is stored, prepared or applied

RISKS FOR PATIENTS

Potential risk

- Paravasation (IV catheter moves out of the vein and chemotherapy is applied into the surrounding tissue)

- Overdosing and underdosing

- Increased side-effects (uninformed patients fail to notice and communicate early signs or symptoms)

- Application of the wrong drug

Counter measure

- Use checklists and clinical double checks

- Educate to enable them to play an active role in treatment and error prevention patients

- Obtain patient’s consent before application, use clinical double checks and identify patient with two unique patient identifiers

Sources: