PREPARATION: HOW TO AVOID MEDICATION ERRORS IN CHEMOTHERAPY

OVERALL

Improve communication between physicians and pharmacists: talk and listen to each other.

Use tablet instead of paper for anything in writing.

If handwriting is unavoidable, physicians should write clearly. When in doubt, pharmacists should ask for confirmation before proceeding.

Training: Make sure you’re up to date with guidelines and algorithms.

PREPARATION TIPS

Make sure labels on stock bins of chemotherapy agents are clearly printed.

Review the patient’s data (lab results, weight), as well as allergy and drug-related adverse event history.

Check if chemotherapy orders are consistent with protocol, then review and recalculate chemotherapy doses.

Recheck preparation computations (e.g. diluent volumes, final concentrations, additives).

Prepare chemotherapy in accordance with manufacturers’ recommendations, visually inspect final solution and apply labels.

Source:
1 Interview with Matthias Nietzke, Head of the Department for Chemotherapy Drugs, St. Johannes Hospital, Dortmund, Germany.