

CRITICAL Incident Learning

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

DANGEROUS ABBREVIATIONS, SYMBOLS AND DOSE DESIGNATIONS

Can the abbreviation “D/C” be used to indicate “discontinue”?

When ISMP Canada’s *Do Not Use Dangerous Abbreviations, Symbols and Dose Designations* list was developed it was felt that, while writing out both “Discharge” and “Discontinue” would be ideal, the use of “D/C” to indicate “Discharge” presented a greater risk. This decision was based on incidents resulting from unintended discontinuation of medications at discharge as the discharge order is often followed by a medication list. Some hospitals have encouraged the use of “Home” instead of “Discharge”; a safer alternative for Discontinue might be “Stop”. Both of these alternatives are also shorter.