

IT'S ALL ABOUT PPE.

Hazardous drugs can be found across all healthcare settings, such as hospitals, pharmacies, physicians' offices, skilled nursing facilities, and outpatient surgical centers.

The purpose of USP<800> is to provide quality standards for handling hazardous drugs in the health care environment. The [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health \(NIOSH\)](#) considers a drug to be hazardous if it exhibits one or more of the following characteristics in humans or animals: carcinogenicity, teratogenicity or developmental toxicity, reproductive toxicity, organ toxicity at low doses, genotoxicity, or structure and toxicity profiles of new drugs that mimic existing hazardous drugs.

USP General Chapter <800> describes the standards which apply to all healthcare personnel who receive, store, prepare, administer, transport or who are involved with clean-up/spill management of hazardous drugs. The goal of USP<800> is to protect the health and safety of healthcare workers and patients who may be exposed to hazardous drugs and the environment. Under the hierarchy of controls [elimination, substitution, engineering controls, administrative controls, personal protective equipment (PPE)] which is a method of identifying and ranking safeguards to protect workers from hazards; elimination is the most effective and PPE would be the least effective. Yet, in the healthcare environment, after elimination, substitution and the implementation of engineering and administrative controls, PPE is a reasonable and last line of defense for employees handling hazardous drugs.

Under USP<800>, the facility must conduct an Assessment of Risk if complete containment practices will not be followed for all hazardous drugs.

The Assessment of Risk requires:

- 1) An annual review of the organization's Hazardous Drug list.
- 2) An evaluation of each drug, dosage form, type of hazardous drug, packaging and level of manipulation
- 3) Operationalizing control measures (i.e. containment strategies, administrative rules or workplace practices) to reduce the risk of exposure to the hazardous drugs for your personnel; the use of PPE is a workplace practice.
- 4) Document and record your controls and PPE decisions.

This may seem like a daunting and time-consuming task. However, by partnering with a company dedicated to providing this information for your organizations and assisting in meeting recommendations for compliance under USP<800> Assessment of Risk, you can rest easy knowing your organization will be in good hands.

PharmEcology[®]

Sources: (USP General Chapter 800, North Carolina Board of Pharmacy).

Identifying Hazard Control Options: The Hierarchy of Controls

https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/Hierarchy_of_Controls_02.01.23_form_508_2.pdf ; A

PRODUCT OF OSHA'S RECOMMENDED PRACTICES FOR SAFETY & HEALTH PROGRAMS |

<https://www.osha.gov/safety-management>