

Orientation to Oncology Pharmacy for CON Sites

Q: What are some recommended readings and courses for orientation to oncology in a Community Oncology Network (CON) hospital pharmacy?

Each centre in BC Cancer develops its own training/orientation program based on the requirements of that particular pharmacy; however, the same basic principles for safe handling of hazardous drugs, cancer therapy order review and preparation of sterile parenteral cancer therapy apply to all pharmacies to ensure safe delivery of cancer treatment to patients.

In addition to the policies and standards outlined by the Health Authority, CON Hospital pharmacy staff can use information provided below to orient pharmacists, technicians and assistants to oncology pharmacy.

General Safe Handling Orientation:

It is important for all staff working with hazardous drugs to be informed and educated about procedures and standards that should be followed in receiving, storing, sterile compounding, dispensing, transporting and disposal of these agents.

- NIOSH (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health) Alert Summary – <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2004-165/pdfs/2004-165sum.pdf>

On the Learning Hub

- BC Cancer Oncology Pharmacy Education Program:
 - [Safe Handling Module 1 - General Overview](#) (3 hours)
 - [Safe Handling Module 2 - Parenteral](#) (3 hours)
 - [Hazardous Drug Spills Inservice](#) (15 minutes)

On the BC Cancer Website:

- BC Cancer Pharmacy Practice Standards (Safe Handling Manual)
 - [Module 1: Safe Handling of Hazardous Drugs](#) (2 hours)
 - Directive
 - Checklists

Clinical Checking of Cancer Therapy Orders

Pharmacists require education and guidance to ensure competency to interpret, assess and evaluate treatment protocols and orders. The BC Cancer Clinical Pharmacy Guide and Oncology Pharmacy Education Program Modules can be found on the **BC Cancer Website**:

- BC Cancer - [Clinical Pharmacy Guide: Cancer Drug Assessment and Review](#) (Clinical Pharmacy Guide)
 - Module 1 – Introduction
 - Module 2 – Understanding BC Cancer Treatment Protocols (1 hour)
 - Module 3 – Lab Tests (1 hour)
 - Module 4 – Parenteral Drug Delivery (1 hour)
 - Module 5 – Supportive Care (1 hour)
- BC Cancer Oncology Pharmacy Education Program:
 - [Cancer Drug Order Clinical Assessment](#) (4 hours)
 - [Parenteral Cancer Drugs: Administration, Complications and Safety Considerations](#) (3 hours)After 1-2 months' work experience
 - [Laboratory Monitoring](#) (3 hours)
 - [Medication Safety](#) (3 hours)
 - [Drug Interactions](#) (5 hours)
 - [Patient Counselling: Adherence, Communication, Resources](#) (5 hours)
- [BC Cancer Systemic Therapy Policies and Procedures](#):
 - Policy III-10 - Systemic Therapy Delivery Process

Product Checking

- [Final Compounded Cancer Drug Product Check](#)
- [Cancer Drug Manual: Chemotherapy Preparation and Stability Chart](#)

BC Cancer Resources:

- [Pharmacy website](#)
- [Cancer Drug Manual](#)
- [Chemotherapy Protocols](#)
- Cancer Agency Information System (CAIS) Access [[Frequently Asked Questions – Orientation and Training](#)]
- [Systemic Therapy Update Newsletter](#)
- [BC Cancer Library](#)

References:

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BC Cancer website; accessed Jan 20, 2021. Available from <http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/health-professionals>.