

SUBJECT: HHA ASSISTANCE WITH TOPICAL MEDICATIONS/OINTMENTS

PURPOSE: To provide guidelines to clinical staff and HHA's regarding medication and the role of the paraprofessional in applying topical medications and ointments.

Considerations

Professional nursing staff cannot delegate any task to an unlicensed person that requires assessment. Assessment of a treatment response is the responsibility of licensed personnel.

The scope of practice for paraprofessional staff does not include the administration of medications, which requires the skill of assessment of the medication's effectiveness and patient response.

Mass. General Law Chapter 112, Section 80B, Regulation at 2 CMR 3.05 does allow the paraprofessional to assist a patient in the administration of a medication.

Procedure

1. Nursing staff **must** assess the patient's ability to self-administer a topical medical.
2. Nursing staff should assess the ability of a significant other to administer the topical medication.
3. If the patient could normally self-administer a topical medication but now has physical limitations precluding effective application of a topical medication the HHA may assist in the application with direction from the patient.
4. The HHA will **not** assist the effectiveness of the treatment as it is beyond his/her scope of practice as defined by the above mentioned regulation.
5. The nurse will monitor the effectiveness and/or complications of a given treatment and contact the physician if needed.
6. The HHA will communicate with the primary nurse based on criteria developed in the HHA care plan.