Minnesota Department of Corrections

Policy Number:	**500.2011**
Title:	**Over-the-Counter Medications (OTC)**
Effective Date:	**3/19/19**

PURPOSE: To promote offender self-reliance and participation in their own health care decisions.

APPLICABILITY: All adult facilities

DEFINITIONS:
Health service staff – includes prescribing practitioners, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and certified medical assistants.
Indigent offender – see Policy 300.140, "Indigent Offenders."

Over the counter approved medications list – a list of medications approved by the pharmacy and therapeutics committee that can be purchased by offenders or requested by indigent offenders in limited amounts from the canteen. The current list is posted on the MINNCOR website.

Over-the-counter medication – medication obtained without a prescription, used for discomfort, cosmetic, general hygiene or convenience purposes.

PROCEDURES:

A. Health Service Staff Responsibilities

1. When applicable, assess a $5.00 co-payment for evaluation/triage in accordance with Policy 500.100, "Offender Co-Payment for Health Services."

2. Inform the offender of the need to purchase any further medication from the canteen.

3. Educate offenders to, in the future, anticipate health care needs and obtain OTC medications before they are needed for symptoms. An indigent offender may order up to one item per week within canteen guidelines and property limitations (see Policy 300.140, “Indigent Offenders”).

4. Inform the offender of pill window times as medication must be administered on a dose-by-dose basis.

5. Inform the offender that the offender must utilize sick call option for further assessment if the canteen is out of stock. The offender must show a canteen voucher indicating the item was not available.

6. Refer the offender to a practitioner if symptoms are unresolved with the original treatment plan.

B. Practitioners Responsibilities

1. May order OTC medication for up to 14 days in order to bridge the time until the offender is able to obtain the medication from the canteen. The order must be written for the length of time including the discontinuation date.

2. Instruct the offender that the offender is responsible for the purchase from the canteen and that the OTC prescription has a discontinuation date.

3. Offenders residing in the transitional care unit (TCU) or mental health unit (MHU) may purchase OTCs through the canteen and DOC stores the medication in property as these offenders must not have OTCs in their possession.

4. Practitioners providing healthcare in all adult facilities prescribe OTC medications only if there is a compelling documented diagnosis supporting the need for continued health care maintenance (such as an aspirin daily for heart protection) and such prescriptions are very limited.

5. Neither OTC medication dosage, nor indigent status, is a reason for medication prescribing.

C. Review Responsibilities

A. The contracted medical vendor with the DOC health services unit administration committee reviews reports at regularly scheduled meetings and forwards them to the pharmacy and therapeutics committee for review and recommendation, as indicated.

B. A list of OTC medications available in the canteen and floor-stock OTC medications and OTC prescribing practices are reviewed annually by the pharmacy and therapeutic committee. Reviews are documented in the committee meeting minutes.

INTERNAL CONTROLS:

A. Medication prescribing practices are reviewed by the pharmacy and therapeutic (P&T) committee as indicated. Reviews are documented in the meeting minutes.

ACA Standards 4-4378, 4-4379

REFERENCES: Policy 500.010, "Health Services"
Policy 500.040, "Standing Orders"
Policy 500.100, "Offender Co-Payment for Health Services"
Policy 500.200, "Management of Medications"
Policy 300.140, "Indigent Offenders"
Policy 302.010, Canteen"

REPLACES: Division Directive 500.2011, "Over the Counter Medications (OTC)," 7/5/16. All facility policies, memos, or other communications whether verbal, written, or transmitted by electronic means, regarding this topic.

ATTACHMENTS: None

APPROVALS:

Deputy Commissioner, Community Services
Deputy Commissioner, Facility Services
Assistant Commissioner, Operations Support
Assistant Commissioner, Facility Services

Instructions
500.2011RW, “Over-the-Counter Medications (OTC)”