

VIRGINIA BOARD OF PHARMACY

Use of Automated Dispensing Devices in Certain Facilities

The Board interprets "Hospitals licensed pursuant to Title 32.1 or Title 37.2" as found in § 54.1-3434.02(A) to include state facilities licensed or operated by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services as "inpatient" and which only use licensed health care professionals authorized in law to administer medications. Such facilities may use automated dispensing devices in compliance with § 54.1-3434.02.

From the Code of Virginia, July 1, 2021:

§ 54.1-3434.02. Automated drug dispensing systems.

A. Hospitals licensed pursuant to Title 32.1 or Title 37.2 may use automated drug dispensing systems, as defined in § [54.1-3401](#), upon meeting the following conditions:

1. Drugs are placed in the automated drug dispensing system in a hospital and are under the control of a pharmacy providing services to the hospital;

2. The pharmacist-in-charge of the pharmacy providing services to the hospital has established procedures for assuring the accurate stocking and proper storage of drugs in the automated drug dispensing system and for ensuring accountability for and security of all drugs utilized in the automated drug dispensing system until the time such drugs are removed from the automated drug dispensing system for administration to the patients;

3. Removal of drugs from any automated drug dispensing system for administration to patients can only be made pursuant to a valid prescription or lawful order of a prescriber;

4. Adequate security for automated drug dispensing systems is provided, as evidenced by written policies and procedures, for (i) preventing unauthorized access, (ii) complying with federal and state regulations on prescribing and dispensing controlled substances, (iii) maintaining patient confidentiality, and (iv) assuring compliance with the requirements of this section;

5. Accountability for drugs dispensed from automated drug dispensing systems is vested in the pharmacist-in-charge of a pharmacy located within the hospital or the pharmacist-in-charge of any outside pharmacy providing pharmacy services to the hospital;

6. Filling and stocking of all drugs in automated drug dispensing systems shall be performed under the direction of the pharmacist-in-charge. The task of filling and stocking of drugs into an automated drug dispensing system shall be performed by a pharmacist or a registered pharmacy technician, who shall be an employee of the provider pharmacy and shall be properly trained in accordance with established standards set forth in a policy and procedure manual maintained by

the provider pharmacy. The pharmacist stocking and filling the automated drug dispensing system or the pharmacist-in-charge, if the automated drug dispensing system is stocked and filled by a registered pharmacy technician, shall be responsible for the proper and accurate stocking and filling of the automated drug dispensing system.

B. Drugs placed into and removed from automated drug dispensing systems for administration to patients shall be in the manufacturer's or distributor's sealed original packaging or in unit-dose containers packaged by the pharmacy. Drugs in multi-dose packaging, other than those administered orally, may be placed in such a device if approved by the pharmacist-in-charge in consultation with a standing hospital committee comprised of pharmacy, medical, and nursing staff.

C. The pharmacist-in-charge in a pharmacy located within a hospital or the pharmacist-in-charge of any outside pharmacy providing pharmacy services to a hospital shall be responsible for establishing procedures for (i) periodically inspecting and auditing automated drug dispensing systems to assure the proper storage, security, and accountability for all drugs placed in and removed from automated drug dispensing systems, and (ii) reviewing the operation and maintenance of automated drug dispensing systems. This monitoring shall be reviewed by a pharmacist while on the premises of the hospital and in accordance with the pharmacist-in-charge's procedures and the Board of Pharmacy's regulations.

D. The Board of Pharmacy shall promulgate regulations establishing minimum requirements for random periodic inspections and monthly audits of automated drug dispensing systems to assure the proper storage, security, and accountability of all drugs placed in and removed from automated drug dispensing systems and for reviewing the operation and maintenance of automated drug dispensing systems.