

Section Title NURSING - GENERAL	Effective Date: 8-05	Page: 1	Date Revised:
Subject: ABBREVIATIONS FOR DOCUMENTATION			

ABBREVIATIONS FOR DOCUMENTATION

OBJECTIVE

To provide guidelines to ensure that medical records will contain accurate documentation of the appropriate information and to assure patient safety.

POLICY

To protect patients from the effects of miscommunication, the center will utilize standardized abbreviations, acronyms and symbols that are found in Stedman's Abbreviations, Acronyms and Symbols reference book. The following is a list of abbreviations that are **not to be used** throughout the organization due to the higher risk of miscommunication and the potential for risk to the patient.

Abbreviations Not to Be Used at LSC

Do Not Use	Potential Problem	Use Instead
U (unit)	Mistaken for "0" (zero), the number "4" (four) or "cc"	Write "unit"
IU (International Unit)	Mistaken for IV (intravenous) or the number 10 (ten)	Write "International Unit"
Q.D., QD, q.d., qd (daily) Q.O.D., QOD, q.o.d, qod (every other day)	Mistaken for each other Period after the Q mistaken for "I" and the "O" mistaken for "l"	Write "daily" Write "every other day"
Trailing zero (X.0 mg)* Lack of leading zero (.X mg)	Decimal point is missed	Write X mg Write 0.X mg
MS MSO4 and MgSO4	Can mean morphine sulfate or magnesium sulfate Confused for one another	Write "morphine sulfate" Write "magnesium sulfate"

1 Applies to all orders and all medication-related documentation that is handwritten (including free-text computer entry) or on pre-printed forms.

***Exception:** A "trailing zero" may be used only where required to demonstrate the level of precision of the value being reported, such as for laboratory results, imaging studies that report size of lesions, or catheter/tube sizes. It may not be used in medication orders or other medication-related documentation.