

Competencies relating to administering cytotoxic and biotherapy agents to pediatric oncology patients for pediatric nurses in community hospitals

Competencies: To complete the chemotherapy checklist and to administer cytotoxic and biotherapy agents to oncology patients, the nurse must:

- Possess knowledge of safe handling guidelines for cytotoxic agents and waste products
- Familiarize self with actions, administration guidelines, and side effects of cytotoxic medications as outlined in pharmacy manual and other resources
- Be able to provide patient/family teaching in relation to side effects and management of side effects
- Be knowledgeable about pediatric cancer diagnosis and treatment, hematopoiesis and immune response, treatment modalities, and psychosocial issues in pediatric oncology as attained through education and experience.
- Be able to teach patients/families about their diagnosis, treatment and the cancer experience.
- List and describe chemotherapy and biotherapy agents and classifications and their mode of action, administration considerations, toxicity and symptom management, and late effects
- Describe clinical trials and the role of the Children's Oncology Group
- Achieve 80% or better on the written review questions at the completion of the didactic portion of the course

These competencies to be achieved through:

- Completing "The Basics of Chemotherapy" before attending chemo/biotherapy course
- Attending the Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Competency Course for Community Nurses
- Completing a chemotherapy preceptorship to fulfill all Records of Practice Requirements or appropriate validation at their work site

Related competencies

- care of central venous catheters and venous access devices
- administration of intravenous, intramuscular, subcutaneous and oral medications to pediatric patients

Continuing Competency Requirements

Continuing competency is defined as the ongoing integration of knowledge, skills, judgment and attitudes necessary to meet professional practice standards **in your practice role and specific setting**. The scope of practice for community nurses who care for pediatric oncology patients varies greatly across settings in the province. It is incumbent on each individual nurse to determine what the continuing learning needs are based on the scope of practice in their setting, especially in relation to the type of chemotherapeutic agents being administered.

- the nurse is expected to do a yearly self-assessment based on the above stated competencies
- the nurse is to review their knowledge using the web-based education site yearly www.pedsoncologyeducation.com and complete the interactive case #4: <http://www.pedsoncologyeducation.com/InteractiveCasesLeukemia.asp>