

## APPENDIX E

## Do Not Use Abbreviations

| Abbreviation                                       | Potential Problem(s)  | Preferred Term(s)   |
|--|---|---|
| IU (for international unit)                        | Mistaken as IV (intravenous) or 10 (ten)                                | Write 'international unit'                                  |
| MS, MSO <sub>4</sub> , MgSO <sub>4</sub>           | Mistaken for each other; can mean morphine sulfate or magnesium sulfate | Write 'morphine sulfate' or 'magnesium sulfate'             |
| Q.D., QD, q.d., qd (for once daily)                | Mistaken for each other; the periods or O can be mistaken for an 'i'    | Write 'daily'   |
| Q.O.D., QOD, q.o.d, qod (for once every other day) | Mistaken for each other; the periods or O can be mistaken for an 'i'    | Write 'every other day'                                     |
| U, u (for unit)                                    | Mistaken for zero, four, or cc  | Write 'unit'  |
| Trailing zero (x.0 mg)                             | Decimal point is missed   | Avoid writing a zero by itself after a decimal point (x mg) |
| Lack of a leading zero (.x mg)                     | Decimal point is missed   | Always use a zero before a decimal point (0.x mg)           |

It is unacceptable to use any of the above abbreviations. Ambiguous orders with these abbreviations require clarification or verification with the prescriber.

## Use with Caution Abbreviations

| Abbreviation  | Potential Problem(s)  | Preferred Term(s)                              |
|---|---|--|
| c.c. (for cubic centimeter)                                   | Mistaken for U (units) when poorly written  | Write 'ml' for milliliters                     |
| D/C (for discharge)   | Misinterpreted as discontinue whatever medications follow (typically discharge medications) | Write 'discharge'                              |
| H.S. (for half-strength or Latin abbreviation for at bedtime) | Mistaken for either half-strength or at bedtime; Q.H.S can be mistaken for every hour       | Write 'half-strength' or at bedtime'           |
| µg (for microgram)  | Mistaken for mg (milligram) resulting in a one-thousand fold dosing difference.             | Write 'mcg'                                    |
| S.C. or S.Q. (for subcutaneous)                               | Mistaken as SL (sublingual) or '5 every'  | Write 'Sub-Q,' 'subQ,' or 'subcutaneously'     |
| T.I.W. (for three times a week)                               | Mistaken for three times a day or twice weekly  | Write '3 times weekly' or 'three times weekly' |

The above abbreviations have a large potential for error and their avoidance is encouraged. Ambiguous orders with these abbreviations require clarification or verification with the prescriber.