

# NURSING DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

## Joint Commission Official "Do Not Use" List

Do Not Use	Potential Problem	Use Instead
U (unit)	Mistaken for "o", "4", or "cc"	Write "unit"
IU (international Unit)	Mistaken for IV or the number 10	Write "International Unit"
Q.D., QD, q.d., qd, Q.O.D., QOD, q.o.d., qod	Mistaken for each other Period after Q mistaken for "I" and "O" mistaken for "I"	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  MSO <sub>4</sub> and MgSO <sub>4</sub>	Can mean morphine sulfate for magnesium sulfate Confused for one another	Write "morphine sulfate"  Write "magnesium sulfate"

## Additional Abbreviations, Acronyms and symbols

(For possible future inclusion in the Official "Do Not Use" List)

Do Not Use	Potential Problem	Use Instead
> (greater than) < (less than)	Misinterpreted as the number "7" (seven) or the letter "L" Confused for one another	Write "greater than" Write "less than"
Abbreviations for drug names	Misinterpreted due to similar abbreviations for multiple drugs	Write drug names in full
Apothecary units	Unfamiliar to many practitioners Confused with metric units	Use metric units
@	Mistaken for the number "2" two	Write "at"
cc	Mistaken for U (units) when poorly written	Write "mL" or "ml" or "milliliters" ("mL" is preferred)
µg	Mistaken for mg (milligrams) resulting in one thousand-fold overdose	Write "mcg" or "micrograms"

## Charting Do's and Don'ts

- Verify information given by other HCP's in chart
- Chart interventions and follow up
- Chart communication with other HCP's
- NEVER chart in advance
- NEVER chart for someone else or under someone else's name
- Chart everything
- Review your charting before you clock out
- NEVER change anyone else's charting, even if you know it to be inaccurate. Alert the person and have them correct it.
- NEVER assume or draw your own conclusions, just chart what you see/observe
  - "Rhythmic twitching" versus "seizures"
  - "Patient fell" versus "walked into room, observed patient on the floor"

\*Review institutional guidelines regarding charting Source: jointcomission.org