



Medication Errors Course Syllabus



Developed by

NCSBN Learning Extension
National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN), Chicago, IL

Authors



Tonia D. Aiken, RN, JD

Tonia is President and Co-owner of Nurse Attorney Resource Group, Inc., a nurse attorney-owned company providing consulting and educational training in legal and ethical issues in nursing, documentation, mediation/conflict management, and legal nurse consulting courses. Her company also creates and implements legal nurse consultant programs for nursing schools nationwide.

Tonia is a nurse attorney and mediator in private practice for 20 years in the areas of medical malpractice and representing nurses in disciplinary actions. She is also a national speaker and editor/contributing author for the textbooks *Legal, Ethical and Political Issues in Nursing* and *Legal and Ethical Issues in Health Occupations*, along with numerous other articles/chapters. She has served as a medical-legal content expert for educational videotapes for NLN, Mosby Publishing Company and other organizations. She is a past president of the American Association of Nurse Attorneys and the Foundation.



Julia Weigland Aucoin, DNS, RN, BC

Julia Aucoin has been working in nursing professional development for over twenty years. As both an academic and a practice educator, she employs creative learning strategies, to make learning fun and make it stick. Currently she is employed as an Assistant Professor of Nursing at University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and is working with both undergraduate and graduate students. Julie maintains a consulting practice as well, focusing on computer-based instruction, NCLEX® performance improvement, and accreditation issues for educators. Julie's nursing degrees are all from Louisiana State University Health Science Center and she has taught in Louisiana, Tennessee, and North Carolina.

Syllabus Contents

- I. Course Description
- II. Course Policies
- III. Assignments & Grading
- IV. Course Schedule
- V. Getting Help/Office Hours

I. Course Description

Course Overview

This course was developed with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) to educate nursing professionals on the dangers of medication errors and how to prevent them from occurring. This course provides insight into the scenarios that can arise on a day-to-day basis and gives solid direction on how to handle various situations.

The course consists of an introduction, 6 course sections, a glossary, a reference list, Links to Knowledge, and a posttest. Also, within the course are several reflective and interactive exercises, where learners can assess their understanding of the material.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, the learner will be better able to:

- Recognize events and actions that lead to medication errors
- Identify strategies to prevent risk exposure through appropriate nursing practices
- Describe strategies to address medication errors made by colleagues
- Analyze the adverse effects of medication errors on clients, the facility, and the health care system
- Create a personal improvement plan to prevent medication errors

Logistics

Course type

This course is subscription-based, self-paced, and not mediated by an instructor.

Time and schedule

Learners have immediate 24-hour access to the course materials for the entire subscription period of 3 weeks. Learners can access the course from anywhere with an Internet connection and a computer that meets the specified technical requirements by simply entering their username/password to access the course materials.

The course should take no more than 6 hours to complete in total. Learners should follow this syllabus as a guide to the amount of work to be completed each week. However, NCSBN Learning Extension recognizes that some learners may have inflexible schedules due to work or family commitments. This course schedule may be adjusted to meet the needs of the learner.

Extra time will not be given to complete the course.

Continuing Education (CE) Credit

Learners will be given 6.9 continuing education contact hours upon successful completion of the final exam. (Provider Number: ABNP1046, expiration date October 2014)

Course Materials/Tools

Although an instructor does not facilitate this course, learners will find this course highly engaging and interactive. As you navigate through your continuing education course, connect with other nurses from around the world! Use the [Nurse's Connection](#) to solve problems, discuss topics, or ask questions relating to your courses, or just to chat with other nurses about life and the latest in nursing.

All course materials and exercises are divided by lesson and can be accessed by clicking anywhere on the course tree located on the left side of the screen. Course materials are listed and explained below.

Lesson Content

Readings are presented online. Throughout the text, learners will find key glossary terms, reference links to outside resources (referred to as "Links to Knowledge"), and visual/graphical aids to assist the learner's understanding of concepts presented.

Downloadable Workbook

This workbook should be printed on the first day of study. The workbook download is found under the course "Features" button.

The workbook includes questions related to each lesson of the course that prompt learners to reflect upon learning concepts. This workbook may be required to meet state board of nursing requirements. Learners are encouraged to write their responses directly in the workbook. The (PDF) workbook can be saved to any computer drive and completed at the learner's convenience. **Please open the saved copy each time you would like to add information.** Save it in a folder where you regularly save other documents and you will find it again easily.

Posttest

In multiple-choice format, this test is the final indicator of the learner's understanding of the course material. Questions are based on the required readings. A certificate of completion will be issued once a score of 75% or higher is achieved on the posttest.

Course Evaluation

NCSBN Learning Extension is always looking for ways to improve the course and feedback is extremely important in this effort. Please remember to fill out the [course evaluation form](#) after course completion.

Prerequisites

Learners must be a student nurse or licensed RN or LPNLVN.

It is assumed that the learner is familiar with Internet techniques, such as navigating between pages, following hyperlinks and closing browser windows. Learners must have the appropriate hardware and software in order to fully utilize the course features.

Technology Overview

NCSBN Learning Extension online courses were designed to make learning fun and interactive. Having the appropriate software and hardware will allow the learner to utilize all of the great features of this course.

The GreenLight system requires using Internet Explorer Web browser to access and purchase courses. Pop-up blockers should be turned off and other Internet security software may need to be changed in order for the course to work properly. If necessary, review [technical requirements](#).

Privacy Policy

Learners are required to read and abide by the course [end-user license agreement](#), which outlines policies, including the policy regarding usernames and passwords. Specifically, learners are not allowed to distribute their username and password to give others access to the course. Also included in the [end-user license agreement](#) is NCSBN's notice of ownership of copyright and the prohibition against distributing course materials to others.

Extension Policy

Learners are allowed 3 weeks of access to the course materials. Extra time will not be given to complete the course. Technical problems should be resolved by contacting [technical support](#). Refer to the [Help](#) section for more information.

Contact Customer Service at elarning@ncsbn.org or call 312.525.3749 for questions regarding these policies.

III. Assignments & Grading

Learners are expected to complete the reading assignments, tests, and workbook exercises as listed on the course schedule. In order to receive continuing education credit, learners must only complete the posttest, which is in multiple-choice format. This test is the final indicator of the learner's understanding of the course material. Questions are based on the required readings. A certificate of completion will be issued once a score of 75% or higher is achieved on the posttest. The workbook and online interactive quizzes will not be recorded. Learners are strongly encouraged to utilize all of the features of the course to maximize the learning experience.

Some learners may be referred to the course by their board of nursing for disciplinary reasons. To satisfy requirements, learners may be required to present the certificate of completion, completed workbook, and attendance record directly to their board. Board of nursing officials will notify the learner of any required submissions.

IV. Course Schedule

Learners will complete the course materials and accompanying exercises in the order presented below. NCSBN Learning Extension recognizes that some learners may have inflexible schedules due to work or family commitments. This course schedule may be adjusted to meet the needs of the learner.

Get Started!

Take a mini tour of the course site. Start by reviewing the "Course Tree" on the left. To access a lesson page or test, simply click on its link.

Introduction

Reading

Complete the reading for the Introduction (2 pages).

Section 1: The Root of Medication Errors

Learning Objective

Recognize the events and actions that lead to medication errors.

Reading

Complete the reading for Section 1 (7 pages).

Workbook Exercises

- Complete exercise: "Common Medication Errors"
- Complete exercise: "No Harm Resulted"

Section 2: Prevention of Medication Errors

Learning Objective

Identify strategies that will prevent risk exposure through appropriate nursing practice.

Reading

Complete the reading for Section 2 (29 pages).

Workbook Exercises

- Complete exercise: "Symbols"
- Complete exercise: "Abbreviations"
- Review the case study: "What would you have decided?"
- Review the case study: "What do you think?"
- Review the case study: "Could this have happened?"

Interactive Scenarios

- Complete scenario: "The Wrong Drug"
- Complete scenario: "The Sleeping Patient"

Section 3: What about my colleagues?

Learning Objective

Describe strategies to address medication errors made by colleagues.

Reading

Complete the reading for Section 3 (4 pages).

Workbook Exercise

Complete exercise: "Your colleagues."

Section 4: System Failures and Root Cause Analysis

Learning Objectives

- Analyze the adverse effects of medication errors on clients, facility, and health care system
- Determine the role of system failure in medication error management

Reading

Complete the reading for Section 4 (4 pages).

Section 5: My Personal Improvement Plan

Learning Objective

Initiate a personal improvement plan to prevent medication errors.

Reading

Complete the reading for Section 5 (4 pages).

Workbook Exercise

Initiate the process of developing a Personal Improvement Plan (also available in the online course).

Section 6: Summary & References

Reading

Complete the reading for Section 6 (4 pages).

Complete the Posttest

In order to receive contact hours, learners must complete this multiple-choice exam that tests understanding of the course material. Questions are based on the required readings.

Complete the Course Evaluation

NCSBN Learning Extension is always looking for ways to improve the course and feedback is extremely important in this effort. Please remember to fill out the [course evaluation form](#) after course completion.

V. Getting Help/Office Hours

Technical Support

Technical support is available 24/7:

Live Chat: <https://admin.instant-service.com/links/5668/21000>

E-mail: IS5668_21000@is.instant-service.com

Customer Service

E-mail: elearning@ncsbn.org

Phone: 312.525.3749 (for general course related or billing questions)

Monday–Friday, 9:00 am–5:00 pm Central