



Med Assist:
SUPERVISOR'S GUIDE

The **SARC Learning Central – Med Assist Supervisor’s Guide** is intended for organizations that have, or wish to have staff take SARC’s Med Assist Program. SARC has developed this guide to assist an organization in developing and implementing a comprehensive medication assistance training program.

The Alberta Council of Disability Services (ACDS) has reviewed SARC’s Med Assist online program to assess alignment with the Creating Excellence Together (CET) Standards. This is to ensure that any standards established in the CET, but not addressed in the curriculum, can be met at the time of delivery.

This was undertaken at the request of numerous organizations to provide an additional opportunity to address these proficiencies. **The Med Assist program (2017) meets the CET requirements for training to be provided by a licensed practitioner.**

The Alberta addendum be found at:

<http://www.sarclearningcentral.ca/programs/medication-assistance-training>.

The Med Assist program is intended to provide training for support workers that assist clients with medications.

It is not intended to be an organization’s entire medication training program, but rather, the first step of it.

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WHAT IS MED ASSIST?

Med Assist is an online program that can be accessed at any time and completed at each individual's own pace within 30 days from enrollment. This is a convenient training option for support workers that require training on how to assist clients with medication.

The program consists of seven video modules that outline practical information on best practices in medication assistance.

There is a mini-quiz after each module and a final exam at the end of the program. Each learner must receive 90% to successfully complete the program and receive their certificate of completion. This is to ensure a high level of knowledge to safely assist clients with medication.

If a support worker is not successful in passing the exam, it can be re-written until they are successful, within the 30-day timeframe. Each time the support worker re-writes the exam, the questions will change.

WHO WAS MED ASSIST DESIGNED FOR?

The Med Assist program is intended to provide training for support workers that assist clients with medications. It is not intended to be an organization's entire medication training program, but, rather, the first step of it.

The Med Assist program was created and intended to **supplement** training provided by organizations to their employees on how to safely assist clients with medications.

Once a support worker successfully completes Med Assist, they are deemed to have the necessary knowledge to assist a client with medication; however, it is up to the organization to ensure that the support worker is able to **demonstrate** the skills that they have learned. The organization will then decide when the support worker has successfully demonstrated the knowledge and ability to assist clients with medications independently, and then evaluate on an ongoing basis.

SARC has developed this guide to assist an organization in developing and implementing a comprehensive medication assistance training program.

WHO SHOULD BE TRAINED?

It is the organization's responsibility to decide which employees within the organization need to complete Med Assist and the organization's on-site medication assistance training. It is recommended that, as a minimum, the following individuals complete Med Assist:

- Support workers who, as a part of their job duties, are required to assist a client with medication.
- Supervisory personnel who are providing the organization's on-site medication assistance training.

WHAT IS LEARNED IN MED ASSIST?

Med Assist has seven modules and consists of the following:

- 1. Roles and Responsibilities of Internal and External Resources:** The first module describes the roles of internal and external resources. Information on external resources includes the roles of the physician, pharmacist, nurse practitioner, and organization. Information on internal resources includes the role of the organization, the support worker, and the client. Individuals will learn how all of the roles work together to support the client when it comes to medication assistance.
- 2. Terms, Abbreviations, Labels, Medication Record Sheets, and Repackaging Medications:** Individuals will gain an understanding of the reasons why people take medications, commonly used medication terminology and abbreviations, and medications that require special considerations and/or specialized procedures. They will also learn how to read a medication label, know what type of information is on the label, and understand the different types of packaging methods for medications.
- 3. Safe Receiving, Storing, Labelling, Repackaging, Transporting and Disposing Medications:** This module describes how to receive medication safely and identifies the different methods of storing medications. Individuals will also learn how to repackage medication and understand the guidelines for transporting and disposing of medications.

4. **The 6 Rights of Medication Assistance:** This module identifies the 6 Rights of Medication Assistance which include: Right Client, Right Medication, Right Dose, Right Time, Right Route, and Right Documentation.
5. **Preparing to Assist with Medication:** Individuals will learn and understand the steps to prepare for medication assistance and how to implement the 6 Rights discussed in Module 4. Emphasis will be put on how to preserve a client's rights, dignity, and respect when assisting with medications.
6. **Documenting, Observing, and Medication Errors:** Individuals will understand the role observation plays when assisting a client with medication. They will also be able to identify what to do in the case of a medication error and be able to list what should be recorded on an Incident Report.
7. **Assisting with Medications:** The final module includes demonstration videos to further an individual's understanding of the process for assisting with various forms of medications.

DEFINITIONS OF EMPLOYEES AT AN ORGANIZATION

The Med Assist program reviews the internal and external resources in regards to medication assistance. The following terms are used throughout the program to identify staff and volunteers at the organization:

1. **Support Workers** – Paid employees of the organization who are required to provide direct support to clients. It is the responsibility of the support worker to carry out all requirements outlined in the organization's medication assistance policies.
2. **Supervisory Personnel** – Within an organization, there could be many different terms used to describe supervisory personnel, including Supervisors, Team Leaders, Programs Coordinators, Program Managers, or Executive Directors. These positions are employed to manage the organization. Supervisory Personnel are responsible for making sure that support workers receive the training necessary to do their jobs and that they

follow the policies and procedures of the organization regarding assisting clients with medication.

Supervisory personnel are responsible to ensure that clients are assisted with medication according to:

- The Physician's Order.
- The organization's policies and procedures.
- Best practices.

3. Board of Directors –The Board of Directors is responsible for approving the organization's policies and hiring an Executive Director to oversee the organization and ensure that policies are followed. While the Board normally approves the policies, procedures are typically set by the management of the organization.

An organization is responsible for implementing a medication assistance policy and ensuring that safe medication assistance practices have been taught to all support workers who assist clients with medication.

Having a clearly organized, consistent training program in place for employees is essential. The Med Assist program is just one part of an organization's medication assistance training program.

STEP 1 OF AN ORGANIZATION'S MEDICATION ASSISTANCE TRAINING PROGRAM: **MED ASSIST**

The first step in an organization's medication assistance training program should be for support workers to complete the Med Assist program.

After watching each module video, and completing each module mini-quiz, the support worker should let their supervisor that they are ready to take the final exam.

The Med Assist final exam can be taken one of two ways:

Option 1: The supervisor and support worker come up with a plan and date for

the support worker to take the final exam independently. (In this option, it is important to have the agreed-upon date so that the supervisor can follow up in the event that the Certificate of Completion is not received in a timely manner.

Option 2: The supervisor and the support worker arrange a date and time for the support worker to write the exam in the presence of the supervisor. (This may be a preferred option if a support worker struggles with literacy or has English as a second language, as the supervisor can assist the support worker with the exam by reading the question, providing explanations of the question, and inputting the answers into the online exam as necessary.)

Regardless of the option chosen, upon successful completion, the Certificate of Completion will be available in the support worker's **Dashboard** in their **User Account** in the [SARC Learning Central Portal](#).

STEP TWO OF AN ORGANIZATION'S MEDICATION ASSISTANCE TRAINING PROGRAM: **ORGANIZATION ON-SITE TRAINING**

Once the support worker has completed the Med Assist program and received the Certificate of Completion, the organization will then need to conduct the on-site medication assistance training that is specific to its organization.

All medication assistance procedures should be visible to all support workers. They could be displayed in or near the medication preparation storage area for easy reference. **It is also a good idea to post resource materials in this area, such as Common Medical Abbreviations and the 24 Hour Clock, Appendices #1 and #2 of this guide.** Your organization's procedures for on-site medication assistance training should include steps for:

1. Hands-on training
2. Practice with supervision
3. Observation and checking in
4. Independence
5. Ongoing evaluation

Let's look at these steps in more detail.

1. Hands-on Training

Prior to teaching the on-site medication assistance training at the organization, best practice is for the supervisor to successfully complete the Med Assist program to learn the content.

In order for support workers to fully understand how to apply the 6 Rights of medication assistance, they must watch it being done and then practice with experienced staff. Set up time for support workers to watch experienced staff assist each client with their medication. Always ask the client if they are comfortable with this, prior to this step.

Support workers have the right to receive appropriate orientation and training and to understand their responsibilities in terms of medication assistance in organizations.

An organization's on-site medication training materials should include important information about:

- What the training will consist of and what will be expected of the support worker. One idea is to provide the support worker a document outlining:
 - The date(s) and location(s) scheduled for them to observe and practice assisting a client with medication(s) with experienced staff.
 - Details on the type of medication(s) that will be assisted with, and what the procedure is.
 - What is expected of the support worker to demonstrate that they understand the knowledge being taught.
- Information specific to each client who needs assistance with medication, including:
 - Known health issues.
 - The different medications the client(s) take, why they are taken, and possible side effects.
- The organization's policies regarding:
 - Medication preparation, assistance, and documentation.

- The need for 100% accuracy.
- What to do if the support worker has a question or concern.
- What to do if a medication error occurs.
- The on-site training should take place in the same way for all support workers to ensure consistency. The training should be documented with the name of the person who facilitated the training and the support worker who completed the training – see Appendix 3.

The on-site medication assistance training should not happen until the support worker has had an opportunity to get to know the client and the support that he/she requires.

Support workers **should not** assist clients with medication until they are fully trained (both the Med Assist program and the on-site training) in the organization's medication assistance policies and have demonstrated an understanding of medication assistance procedures.

2. Practice with Supervision

Once the support worker has successfully completed Med Assist, the skills taught should be demonstrated. The supervisor should be the one to conduct this part of the training. The supervisor may verbally “talk the support worker through” preparing and assisting a client with medication, while reinforcing all of the training information.

3. Observation and Checking In

Support workers who have completed both the Med Assist program and the on-site medication assistance training should prepare and assist clients with medications while being observed (and corrected, if needed) by the supervisor. **During this portion of the training, the supervisor should double check all medication before it is given to the client.**

The supervisor may decide that after a certain period of time, depending on his/her ability, the support worker is confident, knowledgeable, and able to assist with medication independently. There is no set period on this, and each organization

will decide when it is willing to let a support worker assist with medications unsupervised.

4. Independence

The step of independence cannot be reached until the supervisor and the support worker are sure that he/she has the ability to assist all clients with his/her medications. The On-Site Medication Assistance Training Checklist, Appendix #3 of this guide can be used to document when a support worker is able to independently assist clients with medications. It is important to reinforce that the support workers be very cautious and avoid mistakes by asking questions if unsure about anything. All questions and concerns are worth bringing up to the supervisor at any point in time.

5. Evaluation (after initial training and periodically)

When support workers assist clients with medication, the supervisor should check in on them periodically. The supervisor is responsible to evaluate the support worker's ability to confidently assist clients with medication. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that best practices for medication assistance continue to be followed.



The general guidelines for evaluation should include:

- All support workers should be periodically re-evaluated to ensure they are following the best practices taught in Med Assist and the organization's on-site training.
- The supervisor is responsible to make sure that medication records and documentation have been done completely and accurately by the support workers that assisted a client with medication.

- The supervisor is responsible to make sure that medication assistance is observed periodically to make sure that the **6 Rights** are being consistently implemented when assisting a client with medications.
- If a medication error is discovered, the reason behind the error should be reviewed by the supervisor and the cause addressed to **prevent the error from happening again**. The organization may choose, at any time, to have the support worker go through any portion of Med Assist or the on-site medication assistance training again.

THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY



Technology is rapidly changing in our society and this is true in the world of medication assistance. Some pharmacies offer to organizations an electronic means of recording medication assistance on tablets or computers. Training around specific technology within your organization must be taught as a part of your on-site medication assistance training.

SPECIAL THANKS

SARC would like to thank **Interlake Human Resources Corporation** in Watrous for their participation in the demonstration videos. We had a great time filming with their clients and employees, and we thank them for their contribution to these valuable learning tools. Featured were:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| • Angela Silzer | • Kara Gelinis |
| • Megan Lannan | • Bryan Gegner |
| • Fraser Harvie | • Agnes Emisch |
| • Halle Martell | • Gaylene Mansell |
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APPENDICES

1. Common Medication Abbreviations, as mentioned in Module 2 of Med Assist.
2. 24 Hour Clock, as referenced in Module 4 of Med Assist.
3. On-Site Medication Assistance Training Checklist.

APPENDIX 1

24 HOUR CLOCK

1:00 a.m. – 0100 hours	1:00 p.m. – 1300 hours
2:00 a.m. – 0200 hours	2:00 p.m. – 1400 hours
3:00 a.m. – 0300 hours	3:00 p.m. – 1500 hours
4:00 a.m. – 0400 hours	4:00 p.m. – 1600 hours
5:00 a.m. – 0500 hours	5:00 p.m. – 1700 hours
6:00 a.m. – 0600 hours	6:00 p.m. – 1800 hours
7:00 a.m. – 0700 hours	7:00 p.m. – 1900 hours
8:00 a.m. – 0800 hours	8:00 p.m. – 2000 hours
9:00 a.m. – 0900 hours	9:00 p.m. – 2100 hours
10:00 a.m. – 1000 hours	10:00 p.m. – 2200 hours
11:00 a.m. – 1100 hours	11:00 p.m. – 2300 hours
12:00 p.m. – 1200 hours	12:00 a.m. – 0000 hours



Helpful Hint: Add 12 to any of the a.m. times to determine the p.m. equivalent in the 24 hour clock.

For example, to determine how to write 7:00 p.m., add 12 hours to 7:00 a.m. ($7 + 12 = 19$), so 7:00 p.m. = 1900 hours.

APPENDIX 2

COMMON MEDICATION ABBREVIATIONS

a.c.	Before meals			o.s.	Left eye
a.d.	Right ear			o.u.	Both eyes
a.s.	Left ear			p.c.	After meals
a.u.	Both ears			p.o.	By mouth (for food or oral medications)
b.i.d.	Twice per day			p.r.	By rectum (for enemas and suppositories)
Caps.	Capsules			Prn	As needed
Cc	Cubic centimeters			Q	Every
DOB	Date of birth			q.d.	Every day
Gtt(s)	Drops			q.i.d.	Four times per day
H	Hour			q2h	Every two hours
h.s	Hour of sleep			q5h	Every five hours
IM	Into the muscle injections (vitamin B12, flu shot)			qh	Every hour
IV	Intravenous (into the vein)			Rx	Prescription
mcg	Micromilligram			SC	Subcutaneous
Med	Medication			SL	Sublingual (oral medication placed under the tongue)
mg	milligrams			t.i.d.	Three times per day
ml	Milliliter			Tbsp.	Tablespoon
NKA	No known allergies			Tsp	Teaspoon
npo	Nothing by mouth			Tx	Treatment
o.d.	Right eye			ung.	Ointment
OTC	Over the counter medication				

APPENDIX 3

ON-SITE MEDICATION TRAINING CHECKLIST

Employee: _____

Program: _____

Date employee registered for Med Assist: _____

Date worker completed Med Assist (on Med Assist Certificate): _____

Implementing the 6 Rights Checklist

This checklist is to be used by the supervisor completing the on-site portion of the organizations medication assistance training program.

6 Rights	Did the support worker:	Observed by supervisor
Right Client	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check the name on the medication label? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the client what his/her name is? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For non-verbal clients, was a picture of the client checked? 	
Right Medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look at the label on the medication package? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match the name on the medication label to the Medication Record Sheet to make sure they match? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match the picture of the medication on the Medication Record Sheet to the medication to make sure they match? 	
Right Dose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbally state the dosage from the Medication Record Sheet and compared it to the medication package to make sure they match? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check the measurement of the liquid or are the correct number of tablets/capsules are present? 	
Right Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist the client within the time prescribed by the physician or by organization policy? 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document and observe the time between PRN medications? 	
Right Route	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist the client using the prescribed route? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get trained in your organization’s medication assistance policy regarding the route for the medication being assisted with? 	
Right Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial medications on the Medication Record Sheet after the client was assisted? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document PRN medication times taken, reasons, and results? 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document all observations, incidents, and errors? 	

Observing Supervisor: _____
 Date review completed: _____

The employee has completed all components of the organization’s on-site medication assistance training and is approved to assist clients with medications independently.

Authorized by: _____

Date: _____