



Supply and Management of Potassium Ampoules Procedure

1. Guiding Principles

The use of Intravenous potassium across the WA Country Health Service (WACHS) Midwest is conducted in accordance with the WA Health [Policy for Intravenous Potassium Chloride](#).

The purpose of this procedure is to enhance the safe use, storage and distribution of intravenous potassium chloride.

Potassium chloride ampoules are only available at two sites in the Midwest. These are Geraldton Hospital and Carnarvon Hospital. All other sites in the Midwest are only to stock standard premixed bags of potassium chloride.

This procedure limits the availability of potassium ampoules and provides guidance to accessing these during and outside the pharmacy opening hours at the Geraldton Hospital and Carnarvon Hospital.

Potassium ampoules are not on imprest in any patient care area in the Geraldton and Carnarvon hospitals and are always stored in the pharmacy.

2. Procedure

Standard premixed bags containing intravenous potassium chloride are to be utilised in preference to preparing these non-standard solution in all areas.

The prescribing of non-standard intravenous potassium chloride additive solutions must be approved by the Consultant / Head of Department on the ward or if in the Emergency Department (ED), the Senior Medical Officer (SMO). This approval must be recorded on an intravenous [MR176 WACHS Intravenous Fluid Treatment](#) chart, clearly identifying the intravenous solution, volume and the amount of Potassium in mmol.

Potassium ampoules are only to be sourced from the pharmacy if a standard premixed bag is not able to be used. The potassium ampoules are to be provided on an individual basis and the exact amount prescribed is to be supplied. Any unused ampoules, due to a change in dose are to be returned directly to the pharmacy immediately upon cessation of therapy.

Details of each issue are to be recorded on a tracking card ([Appendix 1](#)) that is to be kept with the Potassium ampoules in the pharmacy or pharmacy unit.

3. Definitions

Potassium ampoules	Refers to ampoules or vials containing concentrated potassium solution, including potassium chloride 10mmol in 10ml ampoules and potassium dihydrogen 10mmol in 10ml vials.
Standard premixed (diluted) bags containing potassium chloride	Commercially prepared bags containing potassium chloride at concentrations no greater than 1mmol of potassium in 10ml. Available in various solutions (including sodium chloride, glucose and Hartman's solution).
Pharmacy	WACHS Midwest, Geraldton Hospital Pharmacy Department. WACHS Gascoyne Carnarvon Hospital Pharmacy Department.
Pharmacy Hours	Geraldton: Monday to Friday 8am to 4 pm, closed weekends and public holidays. Carnarvon: Monday to Friday 8am to 4.30pm, closed weekends and public holidays.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

For Site with Staffed Pharmacy Departments

During pharmacy hours, the pharmacy staff are responsible for the distribution of ampoules after confirmation that the standard premixed bag is inappropriate. The issuing pharmacist must sign the tracking card

Outside pharmacy hours, the Hospital Coordinator (HC) is responsible for the distribution of the ampoules after confirmation that a standard premixed bag is inappropriate and in accordance with the WA Health [Policy for Intravenous Potassium Chloride](#).

All issued stock is to be recorded on the tracking card and signed for by the HC in addition to the standard after hours recording requirements. Only the dose required at the time is to be issued to the ward. No extra stock is to be issued.

5. Compliance

It is a requirement of the WA Health [Code of Conduct](#) that employees "comply with all applicable WA Health policy frameworks."

A breach of the Code may result in Improvement Action or Disciplinary Action in accordance with the WA Health [Misconduct Policy](#) or Breach of Discipline under Part 5 of the *Public Sector Management Act*.

WACHS staff are reminded that compliance with all policies is mandatory.

6. Evaluation

Monitoring compliance with this document is carried out by the following:

- a. The number of clinical incidents relating to intravenous potassium target is zero.
- b. The annual audit of potassium storage with a target of 100% compliance with the current operational directive for the handling of potassium ampoules.

7. Standards

[National Safety and Quality Health Care Standards](#)

4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.2.2, 4.3.3, 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 4.5.2, 4.10.1, 4.10.2, 4.10.6, 4.11.1, 4.11.2

8. Legislation

[Poison Act 1964](#)

9. References

WA Health [Policy for Intravenous Potassium Chloride](#)

WACHS South West: [Handling and Supply of Potassium Ampoules Procedure](#)
11 March 2016

WACHS Great Southern, Albany Hospital: [Management of Potassium Ampoules Procedure](#)

10. Related Forms

[Appendix 1: WACHS Midwest: Potassium Chloride Ampoules Tracking Sheet](#)

11. Related Policy Documents

WACHS [Medication Administration Policy](#)

WACHS [High Risk Medications Procedure](#) 13/05/2015

WACHS [Specialised-Medication Phosphate Supplementation in Adults Guideline](#)

12. Related WA Health Policies

WA Health [Policy for Intravenous Potassium Chloride](#)

13. Appendix

Appendix 1: [WACHS Midwest: Potassium Chloride Ampoules Tracking Sheet](#)

**This document can be made available in alternative formats
on request for a person with a disability**

Contact:	Midwest Chief Pharmacist (P.Bettridge)	TRIM Record #	ED-CO-14-28289
Directorate:	Medical Services	Date Published:	10 January 2017
Version:	2.00		

Copyright to this material is vested in the State of Western Australia unless otherwise indicated. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the provisions of the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced or re-used for any purposes whatsoever without written permission of the State of Western Australia.

Appendix 1: POTASSIUM CONTAINING AMPOULE TRACKING SHEET
POTASSIUM CHLORIDE 10MMOL/10ML

Standard premixed bags containing potassium chloride are to be utilised in preference to non-standard solutions requiring preparation in all areas.

DATE	TIME	WARD	PATIENT (Full Name and URMN)	PRESCRIBED ORDER (Including fluid type and volume)	QTY of Amps	Taken By Name, Signature/ Designation	Prescriber of Ampoules