## Policy

# All Ohio Living nursing facilities will administer medications from only single, unit dose packages, in accordance with the recommendations from the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists, for all prescription drugs.

# **Definition**

According to American Society of Hospital Pharmacists (ASHP) in1989: “the unit dose system of medication distribution is a pharmacy-coordinated method of dispensing and controlling medications in organized health-care settings.” Single unit packages are dispensed in as ready-to-administer form as possible.

# **Rationale**

According to the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists Statement on Unit Dose Drug Distribution made in 1989: “Numerous studies concerning unit dose drug distribution systems have been published over the past several decades. These studies indicate categorically that unit dose systems, with respect to other drug distribution methods, are (1) safer for the patient, (2) more efficient and economical for the organization, and (3) a more effective method of utilizing professional resources.” The position paper, which was approved by ASHP Board of Directors on November 16, 1988 and by the ASHP House of Delegates, June 5, 1989 goes on to list nine factual reasons why unit doses are preferred in the health-care setting:

1. A reduction in the incidence of medication errors.
2. A decrease in the total cost of medication-related activities.
3. A more efficient usage of pharmacy and nursing personnel, allowing for more direct patient-care involvement by pharmacists and nurses.
4. Improved overall drug control and drug use monitoring.
5. More accurate patient billings for drugs.
6. The elimination or minimization of drug credits.
7. Greater control by the pharmacist over pharmacy workload patterns and staff scheduling.
8. Reduction in the size of drug inventories located in patient-care areas.
9. Greater adaptability to computerized and automated procedures.

**Summary**

In view of the above benefits, “the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists considers the unit dose system to be an essential part of drug distribution and control in organized health-care settings in which drug therapy is an integral component of health-care delivery (1989).” Ohio Living has adopted this position.