



Practice sting 2024-01

## Practice sting Recording home medication in administration registration

This practice sting is particularly interesting for pharmacists and nurses

VMI regularly receives notifications about problems with the use of home medication in the hospital. In the notification below, a confusion between two strengths of a Depakine® solution led to a dangerous overdose.

### Notification

A patient uses 900 mg Depakine solution (valproic acid) twice a day at home. Depakine solution is available in strengths 300 mg/ml (drop solution) and 40 mg/ml (sugar-free syrup). The patient takes the 300 mg/ml solution from home to use in the hospital.

The hospital pharmacy only has the strength 40 mg/ml in its range. Based on that strength, the pharmacy assistant calculates that 22.5 ml should be given twice a day. The administration record states that the patient must receive 22.5 ml of the Depakine solution 40 mg/ml twice a day. 22.5 ml of the 300 mg/ml solution has been administered once before it is discovered that the administration record states 40 mg/ml Depakine solution. The patient therefore received a gift of 6,750 mg instead of 900 mg.

### Analysis

The consequences of the error can be very serious for the patient. Toxic effects are to be expected when ingesting more than three grams in one go.

The cause of the error is twofold. Firstly, when processing the prescriptions, the pharmacy assistant does not take into account that the patient continues to use the Depakine solution that he brings from home in the hospital. The pharmacy assistant converts this to the strength in the hospital's range and adjusts the dosage accordingly. This strength and dosage will be recorded in the administration register. Secondly, the nurse who administers the Depakine solution does not see that the strength in the administration record does not correspond to that of the Depakine brought from home by the patient.

### Recommendations

#### For the pharmacist

Always enter home medication that will be used in the hospital with the correct strength and dosage into the hospital information system.

#### For nursing

Check on the basis of the administration record whether the correct medicine is given in the correct strength and in the correct dosage.