

Institute for Safe Medication Practices
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**ISMP Launches First High-Alert
Medication Safety Self Assessment**

Horsham, Pa.— The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) is launching a groundbreaking new medication safety self assessment that will help hospitals and certain outpatient settings evaluate their best practices related to specific high-alert medications, identify opportunities for improvement, and track their experiences over time. ISMP defines high-alert medications as those bearing a heightened risk of causing significant patient harm when used in error.

The ISMP Medication Safety Self Assessment[®] for High-Alert Medications is being funded through a contract with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Professional Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement/Safe Use Initiative, and will focus on best practices for eleven medication categories, including opioids, insulin, neuromuscular blocking agents, chemotherapy, and moderate and minimal sedation.

Healthcare providers who submit their assessment findings to ISMP anonymously via a secure internet portal **by December 15, 2017**, will be able to obtain their weighted scores so that they can compare themselves to demographically similar organizations. Participation in the self assessment may also help healthcare organizations analyze how they are meeting requirements for managing high-alert medications from regulatory or accrediting agencies, such as the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and The Joint Commission.

Healthcare organizations that can benefit from the new self assessment include hospitals, health systems, and some outpatient facilities, such as ambulatory surgery centers, emergency/urgent care facilities, oncology clinics, treatment centers, dental surgery suites, endoscopy centers, and diagnostic testing centers.

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ISMP recommends that healthcare organizations establish multidisciplinary teams to work on the assessment. Participants can complete the tool in phases, responding to just the sections on the high-alert medication categories used in their facilities. An online form is available to record responses, and information entered can be saved and returned to at a later time.

After a self-assessment section for a high-alert medication category has been submitted, participants can view a generated report showing how they scored in that section. They can then use their scores and how they responded to each of the assessment items to identify and prioritize opportunities for improvement as part of their medication safety action plan. Organizations with large participating groups can contact ISMP to obtain a group code that can be used to aggregate the online submission results of their participating facilities, allowing for a collaborative effort to develop an action plan based on their group's self-assessment results.

As with the data submitted by thousands of healthcare providers in response to prior ISMP medication safety self assessments, the Institute will use the aggregate findings to plan additional education, tools, and resources to help healthcare practitioners. An analysis of the results also will be submitted for publication in a professional journal to detail national efforts to reduce the risk of errors associated with high-alert medications.

For more information, visit <http://www.ismp.org/selfassessments/saham/>, email selfassess@ismp.org, or call 215-947-7797.

About ISMP: The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) is an independent, nonprofit charitable organization that works closely with healthcare practitioners and institutions, regulatory agencies, consumers, and professional organizations to provide education about medication errors and their prevention. ISMP represents more than 40 years of experience in helping healthcare practitioners keep patients safe, and continues to lead efforts to improve the medication use process. For more information on ISMP, or its medication safety alert newsletters and other tools for healthcare professionals and consumers, visit www.ismp.org.

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