Therapeutic Duplication – What is it?

Therapeutic duplication is the practice of prescribing multiple medications for the same indication or purpose without a clear distinction of when one agent should be administered over another. For example, prescribing both ibuprofen and acetaminophen for PRN mild pain, or prescribing both Zofran and Compazine for PRN nausea and vomiting.

Why is this a patient safety concern?

Therapeutic duplication may lead to an unintended overdose of medication, as well as potential adverse drug reactions.

What you need to know: PRESCRIBERS

✓ Check your patient’s current active medications.
✓ Order/select only one medication for each PRN indication. If multiple medications are ordered for the same indication, provide specific reasons or the sequence for their administration.
✓ If a verbal order is provided, ask about the patient’s other medications with the same indication. To avoid therapeutic duplication, discontinue or clarify the specific reasons or the sequence for their administration.
✓ Pharmacy or Nursing may contact you if there is suspected therapeutic duplication.
✓ For any questions or concerns, contact the Pharmacy Administrator On-Call at: 1-6806 (Pager)