

In a study done in The Netherlands by R. Nieweg, it became clear that nurses do not always follow policies for safe handling. The literature suggests several reasons for non compliance such as inconvenience, "lack of necessity" or "we have always done it this way".

This session will address the following issues

- What risks do nurses encounter when handling toxic drugs?
- Does your institute/country have guidelines for handling toxic drugs?
- Are the guidelines, which are available in your institute/country research-based, workable and being evaluated?
- What can you do to reduce your contamination risk?
- Are there measures which can provide a high degree of protection?

Information concerning risks and safety measures should be clear and made available to all who work with toxic agents. Only then can health care workers and nurses specifically gain more insight into the risks involved and the safety measures which are necessary.

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SAFE HANDLING OF TOXIC DRUGS

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Health care providers view themselves as immune against hazards in their work environment. Responsibility to create a safe environment and to protect themselves is shared by management and staff. Management defines policy, create rules and standards in order to disseminate them to each employee. The responsibility of the employee is to update knowledge and demand necessary equipment which implement the standards and periodically appraise their personal health.

There is a gap between knowledge, awareness and behavior towards the safe handling of toxic drugs.

In this session we will discuss: Compliance to regulations for safe handling in hospital and home settings, ways to recognize and influence behavioral patterns and incorporate safe conduct without causing distress to the patient population.