

## **Development of a Training Program for Hazardous Drugs Handling**

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**Objective:** We sought to create an effective, accessible, sustainable, multi-faceted pharmacy staff training program for safe handling of hazardous drugs that could be easily adapted for other disciplines. We also wanted to design a program that would advise staff on an ongoing basis about known or reasonably foreseeable risks to safety and health arising from hazardous drugs used in pharmacy work areas.

**Methods:** We conducted a needs assessment, then designed and evaluated a set of instructional materials that form a comprehensive training program for safe handling of hazardous drugs. The materials include a slide presentation intended for face-to-face inservices, a self-learning package in hard copy and on-line format, an annual refresher quiz, and a mock spill drill.

**Results:** Since inception of the training program in 2010, 335 pharmacy staff members have completed one or more training program components. Field tests of each component have improved content, enabled high success rates on refresher quizzes, and identified opportunities to improve the region's Safe Medication Handling policy. The training program has been easy to sustain at a reasonable cost.

**Conclusion:** Our experience has shown that improving staff safety requires not only a policy and associated procedures, job aides and work tools, but also a comprehensive training program to ensure initial and ongoing use of job aides and work tools by front line staff members. Adoption of the pharmacy hazardous drugs training program for training of nursing personnel region-wide attests to the quality of the program and to pharmacy's medication safety leadership role. Training program materials will be available for viewing during the facilitated poster presentation.