

GMVEMSC JITSO for Wasting Controlled Medications

1/8/2025

After a visit from the State Pharmacy Board inspectors, one of our council agencies was advised that they were wasting medications incorrectly. They were informed that the controlled medication must be wasted into a sharps container, and this must be documented as well. Due to the fact that this affects all participating agencies and all hospitals in the drug bag system, the following JITSO is required.

When wasting controlled medications after the conclusion of a call, all providers will dispense the substance into a secure sharps container in the ambulance. Documentation of this waste will occur on the new, approved drug bag usage form which includes a space to record that this action occurred. There will be no other options for wasting controlled medications from the GMVEMSC Drug Bags.

To be clear, providers cannot simply put the vial with the controlled substance in the sharps. It must be drawn and then dispensed into the sharps container.

Additionally, this cannot be done in the hospital as dispensing liquid medications in sharps containers violates Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) directives.

Agencies that need to waste a controlled medication that they stock above and beyond the medications in the GMVEMSC Drug bag (Etomidate, Succinylcholine, etc.) will establish a policy for waste that is approved by their medical direction. Examples include a commercial drug waste container, spraying the medications into an absorbent material, or dispensing into a sharps as mentioned above.

Any agency with questions concerning best practices can contact the co-chair of the GMVEMSC Drug Bag Committee.