

**Institute for Safe Medication Practices  
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[www.ismp.org](http://www.ismp.org)

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**New ISMP Guidelines Address Safe  
Use of Subcutaneous Insulin in Adults**

**HORSHAM, Pa.** – For years, insulin has been shown to be associated with more medication error-related harm than any other drug. The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) recently released a set of consensus-based practices to help healthcare practitioners prevent errors and improve outcomes for adult patients with diabetes who are receiving subcutaneous insulin.

“The new *ISMP Guidelines for Optimizing Safe Subcutaneous Insulin Use in Adults* provide recommendations on avoiding unsafe practices and at-risk behaviors involving insulin over the entire continuum of care,” said Michael Cohen, RPh, MS, ScD (hon.), DPS (hon.), FASHP, ISMP President. “The document also addresses recommendations for evolving practices, devices, and technology that aim to enhance insulin use, such as the use of concentrated insulins and insulin pen devices.”

The guidelines were developed following a national summit of expert stakeholders convened by ISMP near Philadelphia. Fifty-two participants, representing a range of frontline practitioners, professional organizations, regulatory bodies, and insulin product vendors from across the US, attended the summit to discuss safety challenges and strategies for optimizing and standardizing the delivery of subcutaneous insulin. The summit and production of the guidance document were funded through the generous support of BD.

The new guidelines focus on the use of subcutaneous insulin in acute care and outpatient locations, both within facilities and during transitions in care. Key areas covered include:

- Prescribing
- Pharmacy management and distribution
- Preparation and administration

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- Insulin pen and vial use
- Monitoring patients
- Patient education

“At BD, we’re committed to advancing the management of diabetes beyond the solutions we provide,” said Dr. Larry Hirsch, Worldwide Vice President of Medical Affairs for Diabetes Care at BD. “We are proud to collaborate with health care leaders around the world to help evolve clinical practices and technologies that aim to enhance the safety of insulin use.”

ISMP stresses the importance of monitoring for adverse hypoglycemic and hyperglycemic events with subcutaneous insulin use, as well as identification and reporting of insulin-related errors wherever they may occur during the medication use process, in order to promote safe practices and continued learning within the healthcare community. Errors can be reported to the ISMP National Medication Errors Reporting Program (MERP) at: <https://www.ismp.org/errorReporting/reportErrortoISMP.aspx>.

For a copy of the ISMP Guidelines on Optimizing Safe Subcutaneous Insulin Use in Adults, visit: <http://www.ismp.org/Tools/guidelines/Insulin-Guideline.pdf>

**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](http://www.ismp.org).

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