

Module 24 – The Role of the Home Care Aide in
Medication Administration

**Handout #1 – NC Board of Nursing Guide for
Assisting Patients with Self-Administration of Medications**

Assisting with self-administration of medications are limited to one or more of the following activities:	
1	Reminding the patient to take the medication through verbal suggestion, prompting, and/or gesturing
2	Opening and handing an original marked labeled container to the patient
3	Opening and handing the patient a pre-filled labeled medication holder, labeled unit dose container, or labeled syringe
4	Assisting with the removal of a medication from a container, breaking a tablet, crushing a tablet and, if necessary, per plan of care, mixing a medication in water, another liquid, or a food product as directed by the nurse
5	Guiding the hand of the patient to self-administer the medication by appropriate route; and/or,
6	Observing the patient take the medication
<u>NOTE:</u> Pre-filling and labeling must be done by the licensed nurse or patient's significant other and marked with the patient's name and time of dose. The home care aide may not perform pre-filling and labeling of medication holders.	

Reference: 21 NCAC 36.0221 (b) – LICENSE REQUIRED RULE
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Module 24 – The Role of the Home Care Aide in Medication Administration

Activity #1 – Can/Cannot

Activity	The home care aide CAN do this	The home care aide CANNOT do this
Put the patient's pills in his/her pill box		
Recommend the patient take a multivitamin each day for better health		
Read pill bottle labels for the patient		
Open the pill bottles for a patient who suffers from severe arthritis		
Draw up insulin into a syringe for a patient with diabetes		
Call the pharmacy to refill the patient's prescriptions as requested by a nurse or the patient/family member		
Tell the nurse supervisor of doctor ordered changes to your patient's medication regimen		
Recommend ibuprofen to your patient who has a headache		
Tell your patient, who has a urinary tract infection, that he/she should drink cranberry juice and eat yogurt		
Report to the nurse supervisor any changes in the patient or from what patient reports to you		

Module 24 – The Role of the Home Care Aide in Medication Administration

Activity #1 – Can/Cannot: Faculty Answer Guide

Activity	The home care aide CAN do this	The home care aide CANNOT do this
Put the patient's pills in his/her pill box		X
Recommend the patient take a multivitamin each day for better health		X
Read pill bottle labels for the patient	X	
Open the pill bottles for a patient who suffers from severe arthritis	X	
Draw up insulin into a syringe for a patient with diabetes		X
Call the pharmacy to refill the patient's prescriptions	X	
Tell the nurse supervisor of doctor ordered changes to your patient's medication regimen	X	
Recommend ibuprofen to your patient who has a headache		X
Tell your patient, who has a UTI, that he/she should drink cranberry juice and eat yogurt		X
Report to the nurse supervisor any new side effects from medications the patient reports	X	

Module 24 – The Role of the Home Care Aide in Medication Administration

Activity #2 – Case Scenarios

An older female individual who has arthritis is filling her own pill box, so all the days/times sections are open. She accidentally knocks it over and pills go flying everywhere. As a home care aide, you are taught not to fill a pill box, but you know where the pills go as you have seen her fill it many times. What do you do?

A patient's daughter tells you that her mother has started on a new medication but does not want to take it. She instructs you to hide it in the patient's applesauce with breakfast each morning so that the patient will not be aware that she is taking it. What should you do?

Your patient has been diagnosed with a urinary tract infection and has been started on a new antibiotic. Shortly after your patient's first dose, your patient begins to itch and suddenly you notice a breathing pattern change. What could be happening and what should you do?

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Activity #2 – Case Scenarios – Faculty Answer Guide

An older female individual who has arthritis is filling her own pill box, so all the days/times sections are open. She accidentally knocks it over and pills go flying everywhere. As a home care aide, you are taught not to fill a pill box, but you know where the pills go as you have seen her fill it many times. What do you do?

Do not fill the pill box. You should first help to gather up the pills and afterwards, call your office and speak with your supervisor. Knowing how to do something does not give you the authorization to do it.

A patient's daughter tells you that her mother has started on a new medication but does not want to take it. She instructs you to hide it in the patient's applesauce with breakfast each morning so that the patient will not be aware that she is taking it. What should you do?

You may not hide or conceal any medications. Report this to your supervisor who should in turn speak the daughter and produce better methods to ensure that the patient is taking their medications.

Your patient has been diagnosed with a urinary tract infection and is started on a new antibiotic. Shortly after your patient's first dose, your patient begins to itch and suddenly you notice a breathing pattern change. What could be happening and what should you do?

This patient may be having a life-threatening allergic reaction. First, call 911 immediately. Afterwards, call the office to report your findings and actions.