



# Drug Delivery Services

## DID YOU KNOW?

The delivery of medications in a hospital is a multi-step process.

- After a physician writes a medication order, it is sent to the pharmacy department, where three things happen:
  - A pharmacist assesses the order for appropriateness, according to the patient's diagnosis and treatment plan.
  - A pharmacy technician fills the order for the medication, which may be for ingestion by mouth (for example, tablets), application onto the skin (cream), or intravenous infusion (given by a needle into the vein).
  - The pharmacy technician then labels the medication:
    - medication name, dose, how to administer, and information about the patient
- Pharmacists oversee the process of medication delivery from the central pharmacy. Pharmacy technicians have an important role in filling orders and checking each other's work.
- A variety of programs, equipment, and activities are crucial to ensuring that medications are delivered accurately, minimizing the chance of errors, and preventing medication waste:
  - Automatic machines for packaging tablets
  - Unit-dose systems that package each dose of medication for each patient in a ready-to-use form
  - A sterile room with specialized equipment to prepare medications that will be given intravenously, including cancer chemotherapy
  - Systems for controlling narcotics, to allow for legal accounting of these medications
  - Inventory services to ensure that adequate supplies of each medication are available

