



ABSOLUTE SCOOP

DID YOU KNOW?

Absolute's Account Managers conduct routine audits to ensure starter box medications are properly stored, stocked, and documented.



STARTER BOX MEDICATION

Written by Jenna Hessedence, CPhT, LSS Yellow Belt, Data Entry Manager

It's 10:00 p.m., and Betty's blood sugar is dropping fast. She needs a glucagon product—immediately. But the refill was missed.

You think fast... Call pharmacy for drop shipment? Then you remember the starter box.

You head to the med room, open the starter box, and there it is—a glucagon product ready when it's needed most. Within minutes, Betty receives her medication and a potential emergency is avoided.

Moments like this are exactly why starter boxes are so important. To help prevent delays in patient care, Absolute Pharmacy provides starter boxes stocked with sentinel and other commonly used medications. These supplies allow medications to be dispensed immediately when a new order is placed or when therapy must begin without delay. **Using a starter box ensures residents receive critical medications as soon as possible.** This supports continuity of care, improves workflow efficiency, and helps avoid treatment interruptions while awaiting delivery.

Absolute Pharmacy offers different starter box types including Electronic and Traditional, based on the facility setting and acuity level.

- Electronic starter boxes are ideal for higher-acuity settings. These systems enhance safety and accuracy by electronically documenting which resident received which medication. They also automatically notify the pharmacy for billing and restocking, reducing discrepancies and helping maintain appropriate inventory levels.
- Traditional starter boxes are well-suited for lower-acuity facilities and Assisted Living communities. They provide quick, reliable access to essential medications when time matters most.

Starter boxes are routinely monitored to ensure availability of key medications. For controlled medications, an authorization code issued by pharmacy is required. This ensures a valid prescription is on file and that the resident has an active order. When pulling from a traditional starter box, it is important to send the refill request to the pharmacy with the resident's name for billing purposes. Controlled medications cannot be refilled without a resident name associated with the order.

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Accurate and timely documentation is essential. Clear records of when a starter medication is pulled and to whom it is administered help protect residents, staff, and the facility. Thorough documentation also supports compliance with Board of Pharmacy requirements and helps avoid unnecessary investigations or reporting concerns related to unaccounted medications.

Absolute Pharmacy Account Managers conduct routine audits to ensure starter medications are properly stored, stocked, and documented. These audits are designed to support your team and maintain compliance standards. When documentation is complete and consistent, the process is smooth and efficient for everyone involved.

Starter boxes are more than a convenience—they are a critical safety net that allows your team to act quickly and confidently in urgent situations. If you have questions about your current starter box, documentation procedures, or which option best fits your facility, please reach out to your Account Manager.

References:

<https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/rule-4729-5-9-03.1-3>

The facility may use a pharmacy-supplied starter box with controlled substances to meet immediate patient needs until patient-specific medication arrives. The facility must ensure a valid prescription/order is obtained before administration, and maintain required dispensing records through the pharmacy. Starter supplies must be secured in a tamper evident method. All records must be maintained and readily retrievable for 3 years.



About the Author



Outside of work, Jenna loves spending time with her son, Owen and is a volunteer assistant coach for his Soccer team. Jenna is on her City Council, and heads up the East Sparta Playground committee. She enjoys taking road trips with her family.

Jenna Hessedence, CPhT, is the Data Entry Manager for Absolute Pharmacy. She has been with Absolute for over 15 years. Jenna began her career in Data Entry before moving to the Customer Service Team in 2015. In 2025, she transitioned into her current leadership role, where she now oversees the Data Entry Team. Jenna also leads the pharmacy's annual Flu Vaccine Clinic Program and has been recognized for her outstanding work ethic, most recently receiving a Helping Hand Award.

Outside of work, Jenna enjoys spending time with her son, Owen and is a proud Band and Soccer Mom. She is a member of her City Council and leads the East Sparta Playground Committee. In her free time, Jenna loves taking road trips with her family.

Why shouldn't you iron a four-leaf clover?

You don't want to press your luck.



What do you get when two leprechauns have a conversation?

A lot of small talk.