Purpose:
To provide guidelines for the proper handling of multi-dose medication vials to prevent microbiological contamination.

Policy:
Multi-dose vials must be labeled when first opened with an expiration date of twenty eight (28) days unless there is a shorter expiration date specified by the manufacturer.

Procedure:
- All medication packaged in ampules is intended for one time use only and the unused portion shall be discarded once opened.
- All vials intended for multiple use contain preservatives and are labeled by the manufacturer as multi-dose or multiple use vials.
- All vials without preservatives or not indicated as multiple use by the manufacturer must be discarded after one-time use even if only a fraction of the vial’s volume is withdrawn.
- If medication vials require the addition of fluid for reconstitution such as lyophilized powders, the person reconstituting the vial shall place the time and date of reconstitution on the vial’s label. After reconstitution, proper storage and length of storage time after reconstitution shall be according to manufacturer’s recommendations.
- All multi-dose vials of medication shall be dated when first opened twenty eight days (28) from the date of opening.
  1) The vials shall be discarded on that date.
  2) Once opened, vials shall be stored in an enclosed clean area. Storage is to be at the manufacturer’s recommended storage temperature for the drug.
- Multi dose containers of nasal spray or hand held inhalers, or tubes of medication ointment or gel shall be dated at the time of opening and labeled specifically for use on one individual patient.
- Upon discharge the container/tube should be given to the patient to take home if the physician instructs continued use or the container/tube is to be discarded.