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Q: How should a LTC facility dispose of unused medications?

A: Illinois does have the Safe Pharmaceutical Disposal Act (click here); however, this statute only deals with unused medications in a solid form and only states that they are not to be discharged, disposed of, flushed, poured or emptied into a public wastewater collection system or septic system. Interestingly, there is no direction on the disposal of liquid medications, intravenous fluids, syringes, transdermal patches or other unused medications. The statute goes on to state that facilities shall modify their written medication protocols to be consistent with the requirements of this Act. Other than the above, the handling of unused medications should be a discussion between the facility and your LTC pharmacy provider. They should be able to help you develop a policy with regard to unused medications that addresses the concerns in the above noted Act and also the handling and disposal of all unused medications in your facility.