

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Registered Nurse (RN) / Registered Midwife (RM) is authorised to instigate nurse/midwife initiated medication without an authorised prescriber's order under the specific circumstances set out in the **INDICATIONS** section and provided there are no contraindications present.

It is important for nursing and midwifery staff to remain aware that:

- Minor ailments may be symptoms of other more serious diseases or may be adverse reactions to medication already prescribed
- Nurse-initiated medication may interact with the patient's prescribed medication
- The maximum daily recommended dose of the medication must not be exceeded<sup>1</sup>

The administering nurse/midwife must record the administration on an approved paper or electronic medication chart, clearly indicating that the medicine was nurse initiated.

If the patient continues to require the medication (ie more than two doses in 24 hours) then a medical officer (MO) must be consulted and a regular or PRN order obtained.

A change in the patient's condition such as newly occurring or increasing severity of symptoms must be reported to the MO and investigated.

## **INDICATIONS**

Treatment of head lice and eggs in inpatients over 2 years of age.

## **CONTRAINDICATIONS**

Hypersensitivity to permethrin.

## **PRECAUTIONS**

Safety in children less than two years of age has not been demonstrated.

## **HISTORY / ASSESSMENT**

Review history of head lice infestation and treatment

Confirmation of live head lice infestation

**PROTOCOL / ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES**

<b>Caution: CHECK for allergies and/or contraindications</b>			
Drug	Dose	Route	Frequency
Permethrin 1% Liquid	Apply to clean damp hair. Leave on for 10 minutes. Wash thoroughly, towel dry and comb with a metal fine-tooth comb.	Topical	Once
Check lice are killed the following day. Follow up treatment may be required in 7 days			

**MONITORING - POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS/INTERACTIONS**

The product may be irritant to the eyes. In case of contact, rinse with plenty of water. If skin irritation persists or if infection is present, discontinue use and consult a doctor. If swallowed, seek urgent medical advice and contact Poisons Centre. Overuse of insecticides may cause irritation and result in resistant lice.

**DOCUMENTATION**

A record of the administration must be made on the approved paper or electronic medication chart noting that the medication was nurse initiated.

A further record of the medication administered including indication, dose and effect must be included in the patient’s health care record.

**PRACTICE POINTS**

- Wash the hair with normal shampoo; rinse and towel dry thoroughly so that the hair is still slightly damp.
- Apply Permethrin lotion to completely cover the hair and scalp. The amount required depends on the length of the hair.
- Leave on for ten minutes, then wash out thoroughly with water and towel dry.
- Use a fine toothed metal comb to remove lice and eggs.
- One ten minute application is usually sufficient to kill lice and the majority of their eggs. To ensure complete eradication examine the scalp after seven to ten days and re-treat if necessary.

**REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

1. [PD2013\\_043 Medication Handling in NSW Public Health Facilities](#)
2. [Medication Safety Standard. Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care \(Second Edition\). Accessed online August 2021.](#)
3. [Lyclear \(Permethrin\) Head Lice Treatment®. MIMS online. Access August 2021.](#)

**REVISION and APPROVAL HISTORY**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Revision Number</b>	<b>Author and Approval</b>
July 2015	DRAFT	Pharmacy Department, St George Hospital
September 2015	1	Approved by SESLHD Drug & QUM Committee
May 2018	DRAFT 2	Reviewed by nursing and pharmacy staff. Minor wording updates made. References updated.
July 2018	2	Approved by SESLHD Quality Use of Medicines Committee
September 2021	DRAFT 3	Reviewed by nursing and pharmacy staff. References updated.
October 2021	3	Approved by SESLHD Quality Use of Medicines Committee