UNACCEPTABLE Abbreviations for Prescribing Medicines

From ACSQHS Recommendations for Terminology, Abbreviations and Symbols used in Medicines Terminology

Unacceptable abbreviations	Recommended alternative	Issue
gutte	drops	Latin term that is not understood by all people at all times
qds	qid, QID	Latin term that is not understood by all people at all times
D/C	'discharge' or 'discontinue' whichever is intended	Use of term risks causing premature discontinuation of medicines if discharge is the intended meaning
IO	intraosseous	Can be mistaken as 10 (ten) or 'oral'
IP	intraperitoneal	Can be confused with 'IV' [10]
IVI	IV	Can be mistaken as 'IV 1'
OD, QD	'once a day' or 'daily'	Can be mistaken as 'right eye' (OD-oculus dexter), leading to oral liquid medicines being administered in the eye Can also be mistaken as 'BD twice daily' or 'QID four times a day'
OJ	orange juice	Can be mistaken as 'OD' or 'OS' (right or left eye); medicines meant to be diluted in orange juice may be given in the eye
U or u	unit(s)	Can be mistaken as the number '0' or '4', causing a 10-fold overdose or greater (e.g. '8U' seen as '80' or '4u' seen as '44') Can be mistaken as 'cc' so dose given as a volume instead of units (e.g. '4u' seen as '4 cc')
IU, iu	unit(s)	Can be mistaken as 'IV' (intravenous) or 10
SSRI or SSI	sliding scale (regular) insulin	Can be mistaken as 'Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor' or 'Strong Solution of Iodine'
Mcg		Can be mistaken as milligram

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