

Tips for Conducting Audits

Whether you use drug log sheets or a single tracking sheet to record your audit results, here are some tips to keep in mind:

1. Establish a process, and follow the same routine each week.
2. A written protocol will help ensure the audit is done in a consistent way, and will be easy to show the inspector (as opposed to describing your process when asked).
3. If you use the logs to capture your audit information, make sure that all inventory (opened and unopened including expired and damaged stock) is included in the opening balance of the log OR includes a step in your protocol whereby the complete inventory is specifically accounted for.
4. Make sure the numbers add up on the order-to-inventory comparison, as well as on the usage logs and counts.
5. Review the records to make sure they are complete and contain all required items, including the initials of the staff member who is tracking the acquisition and the usage.
6. Ensure any changes to the records do not obliterate the original entry – errors should be fixed with a clean strike through of the text, the correct information written above, the date and the initials of the person who changed it (with a note such as “addition error” to explain the change). Electronic record systems must have tracking capacity so that changes made are logged as well.
7. Changes to a log or other controlled substance documentation should be approved by the veterinarian of record, for the sake of due diligence in monitoring for diversion of the inventory.
8. Rotate different staff members in the auditor role. Where it is practical to do so, have two staff members conduct the audit together and, if possible, rotate pairs in the auditor role.
9. Check to see that ordering, dispensing and recording patterns over time are as expected, and ask questions if you see any anomalies, discrepancies or irregularities.
10. On a regular basis, the veterinarian who is Director of the facility might conduct or participate in the audit process as part of the Quality Assurance protocol within the practice.