

Hospital Mandates Nurses Wear Yellow Safety Belts While Checking Out Pyxis Medications

NORFOLK, VA - [Hospital administrators](#) want to crack down on medication errors and they are willing to go to any length to do it. New studies show that many medication errors occur as nurses check out medications at the Pyxis machine and subsequently as they walk to deliver the medication to the patient. [Root-cause analysis](#) of these errors have demonstrated that human factors such as being distracted are potential causes of these medication errors.

In order to help combat distractions, a new policy just approved by the hospital board will mandate all nurses to wear reflective yellow safety belts while checking out medications at the [Pyxis machine](#).



“Shh, don’t bother me”

“During the check out process and delivery of the medication, wearing the yellow safety belt is now mandatory and no one should approach or talk to that individual. Once the medication has been given to the patient and [charted twice](#), the belt can come off and talking can resume,” said [hospital administrators](#).

[Administrators](#) went on, “Nurses wearing the belt should not engage in any conversation and others should not engage nurses wearing the belt including visitors and patients.”

“Are you kidding me!” was the overwhelming response from several nurses.

“You really expect me to wear some yellow reflective belt, like I’m in the Army running at 05 dark 30. Hell no!” emphatically spewed ICU nurse Robert Stanley. “They can shove their reflective belts [up you know what.](#)”

Some nurses are taking a very different approach. Emily Richard, an ER nurse, loves the new idea and is using the reflective belts for another reason. “Yeah, so when I don’t want anybody to talk to me or to tell me what to do, I just wear the belt around the ED all shift. Works like a charm!” If someone asks her for help with a lab draw or a new IV bag, she just motions towards her safety belt and puts her hands in the air just like she doesn’t care.

Administrators thought the belts sounded like a great idea in theory, but it may have fallen short, just like the idea to make [pain the 5th vital sign](#). Family members and patients now interrupt nurses even more to inquire about why they are wearing the belt.

“The belt is so comical,” said Allison Meadows, a [medicine ward](#) nurse. “It does absolutely nothing except create more conversations... about the damn belt. Why don’t they give us fewer patients per nurse, [put less emphasis on bringing turkey sandwiches](#) to patients for [patient satisfaction scores](#), and increase our salaries. That’s how you really cut down on medication errors!”