

3.1 SUPPORT TOOL FOR SYNMED® PRODUCTIVITY

Each of the tasks/actions listed in the following table helps improve work productivity during the automated production of blister packs. It is important to ensure optimal safety of each production step before optimizing productivity.

#	TASKS/ACTION STEPS	POINT PERSON	DONE	TO DO	N/A
	PREPARING DRUGS				
	- Make sure that ½ pills are cut in advance and identify those properly. Also make sure to validate stability of cut pills, in accordance with established procedures.				
	- When a drug is available in jars and blister packs, use jars.				
	- Make sure that pills to be added to SynMed® are removed (uncapped) from blister packs in advance and properly identified, in accordance with established procedures.				
	- Make sure that pills to be manually inserted are removed (uncapped) from blister packs in advance and properly identified, in accordance with established procedures.				
	- Draw up a list of pills to be cut, uncapped or clipped, and indicate maximum quantities of separated units to be kept in stock; keep this list current. Before drawing up the list, validate stability of drugs to be listed.				
	- Draft a clear, simple and coherent procedure for pills to be cut, uncapped or clipped (Document 2.3 – Procedure – For Cutting Pills and Blister Packs).				
	- In the blister pack preparation work area, keep within reach jars of drugs that are used frequently.				
	PREPARING THE SYNMED® ROBOT				
	- Prepare a schedule of daily, weekly and monthly tasks that are related to the preparation of blister packs. - Ordering drugs.				

#	TASKS/ACTION STEPS	POINT PERSON	DONE	TO DO	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ordering supplies. - Robot upkeep. - Daily replenishment of SynMed® containers based on the <i>Inventory Management Report</i>. - Weekly monitoring of inactive drugs by selecting Inactive Drugs in the Inventory Tab. - Monthly optimization of the store based on the Inventory Report (internal and external drugs) and the Proximity Analysis Report, etc. - Review and monitoring of Statistics Reports printed after production of each file, in order to take actions to improve productivity (setting some of the parameters, selecting products, replenishment frequency, among others). 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limit downtimes of equipment during production. This is critical. - Set aside 30 minutes per day for replenishment. - Review the Production Statistics Report and take appropriate action to remedy issues. - Monitor the robot operations in order to identify products for which picking is not optimal; take appropriate action to remedy issues. - Time required for pre-production and post-production by the Production Technician must be the same as for automated production. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limit production errors. - Take the time to train the dispensary staff members who input data pertaining to the programming of dosages (INSTRUCTIONS) and advanced drug treatment schedules. - Review the SynMed® Error Sheet and take appropriate actions. - Review the Production Statistics Report. - Comply with procedures. - Conduct all required quality controls. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make the required adjustments as soon as possible (pipettes, lids, etc.). 				
PREPARING AND SENDING FILES					

#	TASKS/ACTION STEPS	POINT PERSON	DONE	TO DO	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Production of a single blister pack must be limited to exceptional circumstances only. - Send files for production at the beginning of the day (or at the end of the previous day), as close to the production period as possible. - Use the batch printing and batch renewals features. - Create a daily and weekly production schedule, and ensure compliance with this schedule (Document 3.5, Weekly SynMed® Production Schedule). - Create a daily productivity log, especially if there are productivity issues (Document 3.6, SynMed® Productivity Log). - Train all staff members inputting data for the patient coding, dosages and drug treatment schedule. 				
	POST-PRODUCTION				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seal all blister packs before removing them from trays. Identify blister packs that were not sealed because validation would be too difficult after sealing (blister packs that must not be sealed should be exceptions). - Fill the SynMed® Error Sheet (Document 2.6, SynMed® Error Sheet) to list jumpers, duplicates, breakages, and positions. Take appropriate actions to remedy any issues (and save time in the future to correct errors). 				
	General considerations				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whenever possible, avoid moving from one area to another. Keep work tools within easy reach. - Limit interruptions of any kind as much as possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stopping the robot during production. - Pills to be cut or uncapped. - Verifying computerized patient profiles or master records. - Limit exceptions in patient profiles. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o ½ pills. o Patient having more than one blister pack. o Sachet to staple, vial to attach (standardization). - Maintain clear work spaces. 				

#	TASKS/ACTION STEPS	POINT PERSON	DONE	TO DO	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Space permitting, coordinate production two weeks at a time. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In order to maximize productivity and to avoid interruptions, have all the following activities performed by a technician other than the Production Technician: verification of files, orders and deliveries, change of drugs included in blister packs, etc. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work in silence. 				
	PHYSICAL WORKSPACE CONFIGURATION				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic location of computers and printers to minimize movements from one area to another and to ensure continuous flow of operations. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location of drug jars optimized to reduce the number of steps required. Each time a technician has to move from one area to another, time is lost and this has an impact on productivity. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Storage location for prepared blister packs. 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choose an ideal location for the SynMed® robot, which allows for one Production Technician to work efficiently, in a U-shaped work station including two work tables (one counter on each side of the robot to create a "U" shape). 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SynMed® printers should be dedicated to staff members operating the robot, in order to avoid confusion and creating expectations regarding tasks. 				

3.2 CHART OF PERIODIC TASKS

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DAILY TASKS	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	POINT PERSON
<p>Always remember to enter the username and password for each Production Technician operating SynMed®.</p> <p>Replenish SynMed® containers in store based on the <i>Inventory Management Report</i>.</p>	<p>This step is critical to assign responsibility of a given task to the operating Production Technician when the Replenishment History is printed.</p> <p>Schedule 30 minutes at the beginning of each day, either in the morning before the start of production or at the end of the day, after production.</p> <p>Clean excess powder during container replenishment, whenever necessary.</p>	
<p>Sanitize the counter with isopropyl alcohol before the start and at the end of production.</p>		
<p>Fill out the Productivity Log (Document 3.6 – SynMed® Productivity Log).</p>	<p>This task allows to plan workdays and to monitor continued productivity-levels more efficiently.</p>	
<p>Fill out the SynMed® Error Sheet (Document 2.6 – SynMed® Error Sheet).</p>	<p>SynMed® Error Sheet is critical to work on root causes of problems in order to improve productivity and equipment safety.</p>	
<p>Store blister packs in the space provided for future verification purposes (or to prepare deliveries to distributing pharmacies).</p> <p>Alternate the use of USB sticks to make a daily back-up copy, at the end of production; remove the USB stick from the premises.</p>	<p>Work areas dedicated for blister packs "to be verified" or "to be delivered" allow the production team to know in real time the status of ongoing tasks.</p> <p>Every day, the SynMed® computer automatically creates a back-up copy on a USB stick. To protect data in case of fire, a USB stick containing a recent copy of the previous day's data should be kept outside of the pharmacy. A designated employee must carry a new USB stick every day.</p>	
<p>Order drugs required to maintain the inventory, in accordance with the pharmacy's policies, if daily orders are standard at your location.</p>		

WEEKLY TASKS		
TASK	RATIONALE	POINT PERSON
Order drugs required to maintain the inventory, in accordance with the pharmacy's policies, if weekly orders are standard at your location.		
Carry out general replenishment of all containers in store upon delivery of the weekly order.		
Monitor inactive drugs.	Search inactive drugs with the Search Tool located in the Inventory Tab of the SynMed® software.	
Make sure that ½ and ¼ pills are cut in advance and in accordance with established procedures (Document 2.3 – Procedure – For Cutting Pills and Blister Packs).		
Remove pills from their foil packs (uncap) in advance, in accordance with established procedures (Document 2.3 – Procedure – For Cutting Pills and Blister Packs).		
Prepare packaging of drugs that are sensitive to light and humidity by cutting it to allow for easy insertion in cells, in accordance with established procedures (cut packaging to separate drug units) (Document 2.3 – Procedure – For Cutting Pills and Blister Packs).		
Proceed with equipment upkeep: clean SynMed® robot with a cloth and mild detergent.		
- Clean windows.		
• Wipe off any dust build up on flat surfaces (robot joints, depositing tray, inner panel of hatch).		
Order required supplies (blister cards, plastic blisters cards, paper, ink, Ziploc® bags, etc.).		
Compile SynMed® Error Sheets and take corrective actions (Document 2.6 – SynMed® Error Sheet).		
Make adjustments and remedy issues causing anomalies (change lids or picking attributes, move containers, etc.).		
Make sure that all work material is stored and organized in an optimal manner.	Staff should be able to locate all required material within 30 seconds or less; otherwise, there is a loss of productivity.	

<p>Review the Production Statistics Report printed each time a lot is produced and take actions to improved productivity, whenever needed (SynMed® Pharmacist Manager).</p>	<p>Items to monitor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When there is significant downtime between trays being processed, it may mean that there are too many external drugs identified for manual insertion. It is time to review the optimization of the SynMed® store. - If containers must be replenished too frequently, it is possible that insufficient time is devoted to regular replenishment out of the production cycle. 	
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MONTHLY TASKS		
TASK	RATIONALE	POINT PERSON
<p>Optimize the store layout based on the Inventory Report (internal and external drugs) and the Proximity Analysis Report.</p>		



3.3 DAILY TASKS CHECKLIST

CURRENT MONTH: _____ YEAR: _____

SynMed® Tasks (INITIALS)	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri
Week of: _____					
Replenish containers (30 minutes)					
Clean up counter work spaces at the beginning, middle and end of the day					
Fill out the Productivity Log					
Fill out the SynMed Error Sheet					
Alternate the use of USB sticks; remove the USB stick from the premises					
Clean up counter work spaces and put away work tools before leaving					
Week of: _____					
Replenish containers (30 minutes)					
Clean up work counters at the beginning, middle and end of the day					
Fill out the Productivity Log					
Fill out the SynMed Error Sheet					
Alternate the use of USB sticks; remove the USB stick from the premises					
Clean up counter work spaces and put away work tools before leaving					
Week of: _____					
Replenish containers (30 minutes)					
Clean up counter work spaces at the beginning, middle and end of the day					
Fill out the Productivity Log					
Fill out the SynMed Error Sheet					
Alternate the use of USB sticks; remove the USB stick from the premises					
Clean up counter work spaces and put away work tools before leaving					
Week of: _____					
Replenish containers (30 minutes)					
Clean up counter work spaces at the beginning, middle and end of the day					
Fill out the Productivity Log					
Fill out the SynMed Error Sheet					
Alternate the use of USB sticks; remove the USB stick from the premises					
Clean up counter work spaces and put away work tools before leaving					



3.4 WEEKLY AND MONTHLY TASKS CHECKLIST

CURRENT MONTH: _____ YEAR: _____

Tasks to be completed – WEEKLY (INITIALS)	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri
Week of: _____					
Order required drugs					
Manage inactive drugs					
Prepare ½ pills and blister packs					
Clean exterior surfaces of the SynMed® robot with a cloth and a mild detergent					
Compile SynMed® Error Sheets and take corrective actions					
Week of: _____					
Order required drugs					
Manage inactive drugs					
Prepare ½ pills and blister packs					
Clean exterior surfaces of the SynMed® robot with a cloth and a mild detergent					
Compile SynMed® Error Sheets and take corrective actions					
Week of: _____					
Order required drugs					
Manage inactive drugs					
Prepare ½ pills and blister packs					
Clean exterior surfaces of the SynMed® robot with a cloth and a mild detergent					
Compile SynMed® Error Sheets and take corrective actions					
Week of: _____					
Order required drugs					
Manage inactive drugs					
Prepare ½ pills and blister packs					
Clean exterior surfaces of the SynMed® robot with a cloth and a mild detergent					
Compile SynMed® Error Sheets and take corrective actions					

Monthly Tasks (INITIALS)	Initials	DATE	NOTE
Optimize the store (review internal/external status and location of containers)			
Order supplies			
Clean and organize work areas			