Patient Safety Story:

"Ms. Jones" had always wanted to travel to Tanzania, Africa and finally planned "a trip of a lifetime" over the holidays. She did her due diligence and made an appointment with her Primary Care Provider to prepare for her upcoming overseas travel. Travelers to Africa are required to be vaccinated for Hepatitis A and B. Ms. Jones is particularly afraid of needles, and after careful discussion with her Provider, she elected to receive Twinrix vaccination, a combination vaccine which provides protection against Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B. In doing so, she only had to receive one injection instead of two. The Medical Assistant retrieved the vaccination and gave Ms. Jones her injection, without verifying the medication with a licensed person. Shortly after injecting the patient, the Medical Assistant realized that the patient had received an expired medication. The Medical Assistant immediately notified the provider, who informed Ms. Jones that she received an expired vaccine, and she would have to start her vaccination series over. Ms. Jones was upset, disappointed that a well-known institution such as UHA/Stanford would make such a medication error. Ms. Jones' provider utilized C-I-Care, apologized to Ms. Jones and together they created a plan for Ms. Jones to receive her vaccinations. The clinic manager reported the incident to the UHA Quality Department via the Incident Reporting System. The UHA Quality Department is currently creating a policy to support safe medication practices.

Lessons Learned:

1. **MAs must be trained to administer vaccines in compliance with CA safety standards.** According to the [Medical Board of California](#), Medical Assistants may legally administer medications, *after verification by a physician, or another appropriately licensed person.*

2. **Best practices support monthly audits of medication inventory, including expiration dates.** FDA defines "expiration date" as "the date, expressed at minimum as a year and month, up to and including which a drug maintains its labeled potency, purity and physical characteristics". Utilize the [medication inventory checklist](#) for monthly expiration date audits.

3. Using the [Incident Reporting System](#) is the best way to receive support from the Quality Team to prevent future similar incidents.

4. **C**-I-CARE Service Recovery: Practice strong communication skills, apologize for problems and inconveniences. Show a genuine interest and concern for others. Practice safe patient care- stop and think before you act.

Connect with people by calling them their proper name, or the name they prefer

Introduce yourself and your role

Communicate what you are going to do, how long it will take, and how it will impact the patient

Ask permission before entering a room, examining a patient, or undertaking an activity

Respond to patient's questions or requests promptly; anticipate patient needs

Exit courteously with an explanation of what will come next