NZePS - Memo: Approval to issue Controlled Drug ePrescriptions

Due to COVID-19 authorised prescribers can issue Controlled Drug (CD) ePrescriptions as soon as the practice has completed the NZePS activation.

For Class B CDs¹ this means eliminating the need to hand write triplicate forms.

**Please note:** It is very important for CD ePrescriptions that the practice ensures the NZePS activation has been successful by creating some dummy prescriptions and checking with their key pharmacy that they can use the barcode at the point of dispensing.

**Key points to note**

- All current rules and regulations apply for CD barcoded ePrescriptions regardless of format (i.e. electronic or paper) e.g. no forward dating of prescriptions is allowed.

- No hand-written amendments are allowed on any barcoded ePrescription (i.e. controlled drug or non-controlled drug barcoded ePrescription).

- All vendors are currently enhancing their systems to automatically print the different classes of Controlled Drugs on separate pages i.e. Class A, Class B and Class C (excluding Class C exempt or partially exempt drugs).

Non-controlled drugs and exempt or partially exempt Class C controlled drugs will print on the same prescription form.

Until all vendors have completed this enhancement if a Class A or B controlled drug appears on the same prescription form as a Class C or a non-controlled drug, the medicines can be dispensed BUT the prescription will need to be a printed prescription and have a wet ink signature to meet the requirements for a legal prescription for Class A, B or C (excluding exempt or partially exempt) controlled drugs.

- If a signed barcoded prescription for CDs (Class A, B and C (with the exception of Class C exempt or partially exempt controlled drugs) is either faxed or scanned and emailed to the pharmacy the signed original is required to be sent to the pharmacy within the required timeframe of 2 working days.

- Signature Exempt Prescriptions do NOT apply for ALL CDs (Class A, B and C -with the exception of Class C exempt or partially exempt controlled drugs).

- If a patient presents with a request to reissue a barcoded prescription (for whatever reason) then: Use the 'Reprint' function as this will generate a prescription with the **same barcode number and date as the original**, ensuring it can only be dispensed once.

Please see further information on next page
Table. Summary of requirements for prescriptions generated through the NZePS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NZePS downloaded prescription</th>
<th>Medicine classification</th>
<th>Is an ink signature required on an electronic copy received by fax or email?</th>
<th>Is an original hardcopy prescription required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prescription medicine (non-controlled drugs)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exempt or partially exempt Class C³ controlled drugs</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class A, Class B¹ and Class C² (except exempt or partially exempt) controlled drugs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Methadone**

If prescribers are authorised to prescribe methadone under the opioid substitution therapy (OST) programme please see example script and information in the Getting Started Guide (link below). This will show how the script needs to be completed to avoid any problem at the pharmacy end.

Link to the Getting Started Guide is below - click on ‘Setting up and Using NZePS’ and then found under ‘Downloads’


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¹ Class B controlled drugs: eg, morphine, oxycodone, fentanyl, methadone