

Professional Notice

To: Pharmacy Practitioners
From: Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists
Date: March 18, 2020
Re: Dispensed Days Supply; Prescribing in a Public Health Emergency/Crisis

As the NSCP continues to respond to emerging COVID-19 issues, we have taken the following action in collaboration with the Department of Health and Wellness and the Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia to support ongoing patient access to medication.

Dispensed Days Supply

To lessen the risk of drug shortages that could result from increased demand due to the COVID-19 crisis, the NSCP is providing the following direction to pharmacy practitioners:

- A 30-days supply of medication is to be provided unless in the pharmacist's professional judgment a longer day supply is appropriate.
- Pharmacy practitioners should reassure patients that stockpiling is not necessary and it could undermine their future supply of medication.
- Pharmacies should manage their inventory to avoid stockpiling, lessening the risk that other pharmacies will not be able to provide medications to their patients.

Emergency Prescribing Standards

The NSCP has created a *Prescribing in a Public Health Emergency/Crisis* provision within the [*Standards of Practice: Prescribing Drugs*](#). **This provision is effective immediately and will continue until the NSCP directs otherwise.** Amendments to these standards position pharmacists, in conjunction with the government's announcement regarding reimbursement effective March 19, 2020, to more readily prescribe to meet the public's health needs in the context of current COVID-19 challenges. Changes to the standards to accommodate this provision include:

- Amendments to the definition of Emergency (page 1) to include a public health emergency.
- Revisions and amendments to section 3 (page 4-5) to include prescribing during a public health emergency/crisis in accordance with Appendix H.
- Creation of Appendix H – Prescribing in a Public Health Emergency/Crisis (page 20). Standards in Appendix H are only for use during a public health emergency/crisis when directed by the NSCP.
 - Exemption made to standard 1.9 to remove necessity to use a private consultation room and enable use of pharmacist professional judgment to adhere to infection control while maximizing confidentiality. The rationale is to uphold public health directives on social distancing.



Nova Scotia
College of
Pharmacists

- Exemption made to standard 1.14 to remove necessity to notify a patient's primary care provider or specialist when prescribing. The rationale is to limit the impact of additional notification on an already overwhelmed healthcare system.
- Enable pharmacists to prescribe for patients when their home pharmacy is closed and providing clarity that this is not considered prescribing a renewal when there are refills remaining, and therefore the requirements of section 4 do not apply.
- Authorize pharmacists to prescribe CDSA drugs when they do so in accordance with an NSCP Emergency Protocol. The NSCP is continuing to work with stakeholders on this Emergency Protocol as we await further details from Health Canada on their provisions to enable pharmacists under the CDSA. *****The NSCP will communicate when pharmacists are able to prescribe CDSA drugs.**

The NSCP recognizes the great efforts that you are making to meet patient needs at this time. Please continue to watch for communications from NSCP, PANS and Public Health as we navigate this evolving situation.