



Promoting the appropriate use,
and reducing the abuse and misuse of monitored drugs in Nova Scotia.

COVID-19: Important Information for Pharmacists and Prescribers

In the context of the evolving COVID-19 outbreak and implementation of prevention and control measures across the country, on March 19, 2020, Health Canada made [exemptions](#) for prescriptions of controlled substances under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA) and its Regulations.

Effective March 20, 2020, pharmacists are now recognized as temporary registered prescribers under the NSPMP program to enable activities as defined under this exemption. As such, pharmacists are now enabled to extend prescriptions, transfer prescriptions to other pharmacies, and permit prescribers to issue verbal orders (i.e., over the phone) to extend or refill prescriptions of monitored drugs.

All NSPMP changes in relation to this Health Canada exemption are effective March 20, 2020, until September 30, 2020, or the date this exemption is replaced by another exemption, or the date it is revoked, or the date the NSPMP Board of Directors revokes.

NSPMP has responded by working with and will continue to work with our stakeholders to ensure there are no barriers to maintaining Nova Scotians' access to monitored drugs.

NSPMP: Out of Province Prescribers

The NSPMP will continue to require that all out of province prescribers register with the Program when prescribing monitored drugs to be filled at pharmacies in Nova Scotia. For registration information and assistance, prescribers may visit our website or call 902-496-7123. Registration will permit login to our e-Access site to view patient profiles before prescribing monitored drugs and will allow prescriptions to be processed without any unnecessary delays at the pharmacy for patients.

Pharmacists may call NSPMP for assistance to obtain support for out of province registration. NSPMP will work to register new providers as quickly as possible.



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NSPMP Information for Pharmacists

Pharmacists Dispense/Prescribe Requirements

Pharmacists may extend or renew a monitored drug prescription without the use of a NSPMP prescription form/duplicate pad, if it meets the requirements of a prescription and the conditions set out under Health Canada's exemption s56(1) dated March 19, 2020.

Pharmacists may dispense a monitored drug prescription extended or renewed by a pharmacist, not written on a NSPMP prescription form/duplicate pad, if it meets the requirements of a prescription, and the conditions set out under Health Canada's exemption s56(1) dated March 19, 2020.

Pharmacists are requested to refer to the Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists for requirements/clarifications relating to prescribing and dispensing.

Signature for Receiving of a Monitored Drug

Pharmacists must document the name of the individual who they witness receiving/accepting a monitored drug in circumstances where a signature, or electronic equivalent is not feasible/reasonable at the pharmacy due to social distancing related to COVID-19.

For home delivery of monitored drug medications, the NSPMP refers to the exemption by Health Canada effective March 19, 2020, permitting pharmacy employees to deliver prescriptions of controlled substances to patients' homes or other locations where they may be (self-isolating). Pharmacists may refer directly to Health Canada's exemption s56(1) document dated March 19, 2020, for further information.

Prescription Processing Issues:

For support with prescription processing issues, please follow your regular support processes with your software vendor.



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NSPMP Information for Prescribers

Verbal Orders

Prescribers are permitted to issue verbal orders (i.e., over the phone) to extend or refill monitored drug prescriptions.

To assist with verbal orders, under NSPMP, prescribers will not be required to complete or maintain a NSPMP prescription form/duplicate pad, however, will be required to relay appropriate content required for a prescription, and maintain a record consistent with their College requirements.

Pharmacists may dispense a monitored drug upon verbal order (meeting the requirements of a prescription), without a copy of an associated NSPMP prescription form/duplicate pad prescription being received.

Prescribers are directed to their respective Colleges for more information regarding the scope of verbal orders, and appropriate record keeping.

Faxing of Monitored Drug Prescriptions

NSPMP will support faxing of controlled/monitored drug prescriptions to pharmacies as an adjunct to support Health Canada's exemptions to CDSA effective March 19, 2020, in relation to COVID-19.

Prescription Pad Orders

NSPMP is continuing to process orders for duplicate prescription pads at this time; however, we are continuing to monitor the evolving situation with COVID-19 in Nova Scotia.

We do encourage prescribers to sign up for e-prescribing through the DIS at this time. For more information on how to register, please visit: www.novascotia.ca/dhw/ehealth/dis.

As noted above, verbal and faxed orders for monitored drugs will be permitted, from registered NSPMP prescribers.

For More Information, Please Refer to the Following Resources:

www.cpsns.ns.ca

www.nscn.ca

www.nspharmacists.ca

www.pdbns.ca