



**Royal
Pharmaceutical
Society
of Great Britain**

Law and Ethics Bulletin

Approved wording on instalment prescriptions to cover pharmacy closures

Pharmacists are reminded of the legal requirement that each supply against an instalment prescription must be dispensed on the due date specified on the prescription.

However, the Home Office has confirmed that approved wording can be used by those prescribing Controlled Drugs by way of instalment in accordance with the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001, as amended, which will enable those supplying Controlled Drugs to issue instalments on the day immediately prior to closure should the pharmacy be closed on days when instalments are due. This text is in addition to the usual Controlled Drug prescription requirements. **If a prescription does not contain this wording, or other similar wording approved by the Home Office, the Regulations only permit the supply to be in accordance with the prescriber's instalment direction.**

The wording approved by the Home Office is:

"Instalments due on days when the pharmacy is closed should be dispensed on the day immediately prior to closure"

The above wording can be used where a supply is requested for a day on which the pharmacy is closed. For example, if the prescription stated "140ml to be dispensed on Mondays", and the Monday in question was a bank holiday on which the pharmacy was shut (and the pharmacy was also shut on Sundays), the instalment could be supplied on the day before closure. Therefore, the weekly instalments could be supplied on the Saturday, immediately before the bank holiday. In the case of a prescription for a daily pickup and the pharmacy was closed on the Sunday and Monday, the prescription would have to contain a direction that instalments due on the days when the pharmacy is closed should be dispensed on the day immediately before closure.

Where a prescription contains wording that is different to the sentence reproduced above, the Home Office must be contacted to seek approval for

the wording in question. Approval must be confirmed before supply is made against such instruction.

Pharmacists are also reminded that they have a professional responsibility to ensure that patients are provided with sufficient information and advice to enable the safe and effective use of their medicine. Therefore, where a bottle of medicine contains more than one dose, the pharmacist should ensure that the patient is able to correctly measure out their required doses themselves.