



# Top Tips 2: NHS Prescriptions for Schedule 2 and 3 Controlled Drugs

- The **address of the patient**. In some cases, a patient will not have an address. In such cases “no fixed abode” (or “N.F.A.”) would be allowed.
- The **age/date of birth** only needs to be on the prescription if the patient is under 12 years old.

- The **dose** must be on the prescription and cannot be expressed as “to be taken as directed”. However, a dosage expressed as “one to be taken as directed” would be allowed.
- The **form** of the medicine must always be on the prescription. The form must be expressed as tablets, capsules, ampoules, patches, oral solution etc.
- The **strength** only needs to be on the prescription if the medicine is available in more than one strength.
- The **total quantity** must be written in **words and figures**. It must also be written in the number of dosage units. Dosage units are tablets, capsules, ampoules, patches, millilitres etc.

- It must be **signed** by the prescriber.
- It must be **dated**. You can only supply the medicine(s) within 28 days of the date specified (including any owings). The prescriber may specify a later date for the supply in the prescription directions by adding a supply date in addition to the date of signing. The prescription is valid for 28 days from the latest of these two dates.

- The **address of the prescriber** must be within the United Kingdom.
- There must be **particulars** to indicate what type of prescriber they are. For example, are they a doctor or another type of prescriber.

Pharmacists can amend certain technical errors on prescriptions for Schedule 2 and 3 controlled drugs.

If you are satisfied you know what the prescriber intended you can:

- Amend minor typographical errors.
- Amend spelling mistakes.
- Add in either the words or the figures to the total quantity if the prescriber has missed one or the other off.

## Other things to think about...

- Record keeping.
- Private prescriptions for controlled drugs are different.
- Temazepam is exempt from most of these requirements.
- You cannot have repeat prescriptions.
- You cannot make an emergency supply, except phenobarbitone for the treatment of epilepsy.
- Prescriptions issued by dentists and vets have additional requirements.

For further advice on controlled drugs please contact the Legal and Ethical Advisory Service on 020 7572 2308 or email [leadvice@rpsgb.org](mailto:leadvice@rpsgb.org).