

# Pharmacy Update

New York State Department of Health

Summer 2009

Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement

## Official Prescriptions to Include New Patient Safety Feature

A Patient Safety Feature will be added to Official Prescription forms for the purpose of decreasing medical errors. The New York State Department of Health is in the process of adding a check box feature to the back of Official Prescriptions so that prescribers can communicate to the pharmacist the general purpose for which the medication has been prescribed.

- Utilization of the check boxes is *optional*, but will be strongly encouraged.
- The Department *will not* collect patient treatment information under this program, the check boxes are solely designed to be a communication between the prescriber and the pharmacist.
- Completion of the check boxes is not a requirement, therefore, pharmacists may still dispense prescriptions when the check boxes have not been utilized. Pharmacists may also continue to dispense when older Official Prescriptions that do not contain the check box feature are used.
- The Department will begin phasing in Official Prescription forms that contain the new Patient Safety Feature in the near future.

Questions? Call the New York State Official Prescription Program at 1-866-811-7957.

Prescribers--prevent medical errors!  
Complete box below for treatment category.

Questions, please call the NYS  
Official Prescription  
Program at 866-811-7957 (Option 2)

Cardiovascular	
Gastrointestinal	
Antibiotic/ Anti-Infective	
Pain/ Inflammation	
Cough/Cold	
Respiratory	
Central Nervous System	
Genital/ Urology	
Endocrine	
Other	

## Address Required on Prescriptions, Post Office Boxes Not Acceptable

Official New York State Prescriptions issued for controlled substances must contain the address of the ultimate user. If the ultimate user is an animal, the prescription must contain the address of the owner or person in custody of the animal. The address should be where the ultimate user resides (Example: 123 Water Street or 5678 County Route 1). A Post Office box is not an acceptable address. Pharmacists are not required to obtain authorization from practitioners to enter the patient's address, sex or age if the pharmacist obtains this information through a good-faith effort.

## Patient's Own Meds

In accord with New York State Public Health Law, Section 3320, all entities that possess a DEA registration shall only procure controlled substances from a distributor (wholesaler) or manufacturer licensed as such with the State Department of Health's Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement. This law prohibits any DEA registrant from accepting a patient's own controlled substance medication. Community pharmacies may not take back any controlled substances once dispensed. Similarly, hospital pharmacies are prohibited from accepting a patient's own controlled substance either for safeguarding or for future administration.

## Prescription Serial Numbers

Pharmacies submitting dispensing data to the Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement for controlled substances orally prescribed by a New York State practitioner should enter the number "9" eight times in the serial number field (i.e., "99999999"). Practitioners are NOT required to provide pharmacists with the serial number of the follow-up Official New York State Prescription when calling in such prescriptions, nor should pharmacists edit such prescriptions once the follow-up prescription has been received by the pharmacy. As a reminder, when reporting oral and written prescriptions for controlled substances from out-of-state practitioners, enter the letter "Z" eight times in the serial number field (i.e., "ZZZZZZZZ").



NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
BUREAU OF NARCOTIC ENFORCEMENT  
433 River Street, Suite 303 ■ Troy, NY 12180-2299  
866-811-7957 ■ Fax 518-402-0709

[www.nyhealth.gov/professionals/narcotic](http://www.nyhealth.gov/professionals/narcotic)