

URGENT PRACTICE NOTICE
**Good Dispensing Practice – Control of the Supply of “prescription only”
Medicinal Products.**

The Pharmacy Act 2007 provides that the sale or supply of medicinal products, other than medicinal products on a general sales list, must occur in a registered retail pharmacy business by or under the personal supervision of a pharmacist. Articles 9 and 10 of the Regulation of Retail Pharmacy Businesses Regulations 2008 detail the legal obligations associated with the supply of such products. Article 9 requires the review of medicine therapy and counseling of patients in the supply of medicinal products on foot of a prescription and article 10 provides for counseling in the supply of medicinal products other than those supplied on foot of a prescription.

The supply of any medicinal product designated as “prescription only” must only take place on the authority of a valid prescription requesting such supply. In the case of those products which are subject to prescription control under the Medicinal Products (Prescription and Control of Supply) Regulations 2003 to 2008, each product dispensed to a patient must be only be supplied on receipt of a valid prescription written in accordance with the requirements specified in Article 7 of these regulations. In the case of those products, the supply of which is governed by the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 1988 (as amended), each product dispensed to a patient must only be supplied on receipt of a valid prescription written in accordance with the requirements specified in Article 13 of these regulations.

There are provisions in the Medicinal Products (Prescription and Control of Supply) Regulations 2003 to 2008 to provide for emergency supply situations at the request of a patient or practitioner. In no case, at the request either of a practitioner or a patient, may any medicine listed as a controlled drug specified in Schedule 1, 2, 3 or 4 of the Misuse of Drug Regulations 1988 (as amended) be supplied without prescription, except products containing methylphenobarbitone, phenobarbitone or phenobarbitone sodium for the treatment of epilepsy. Additionally, an emergency supply of any medicinal product containing any substance listed in the Fourth Schedule to the Medical Products (Prescription and Control of Supply) Regulations 2003 to 2008 may not be made at the request of a patient.

The Pharmacy Act 2007 provides for the critical and important role of both superintendent and supervising pharmacists, and sets out an appropriate arrangement for management and accountability in each retail pharmacy business in respect of the pharmacy services provided. The supporting provisions detailed in other legislation including the Regulation of Retail Pharmacy Businesses Regulations 2008, the Medicinal Products (Prescription and Control of Supply) Regulations 2003 to 2008, the Medicinal Products (Control of Placing on the Market) Regulations 2007, the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 1988 (as amended) and the Misuse of Drugs (Supervision of Prescription and Supply of Methadone) Regulations 1998 provide the appropriate operational controls which ensure that the important patient safety, education and gatekeeper role of the pharmacist is facilitated. This is all further underpinned by the provisions set out in the PSI Code of Conduct which govern pharmacists in the practice of their profession.

In all instances a pharmacist should only supply a prescription-only medicinal product on foot of a valid prescription and only after he or she has established the authenticity of the prescription to be dispensed, or the appropriateness of any emergency supply situation. A supervising pharmacist should ensure that all procedures carried out in the Retail Pharmacy Business are in compliance with the legislative requirements. In addition, the superintendent pharmacist must ensure that there are approved policies in place so as to ensure appropriate compliance with those requirements and the requirements of the PSI Code of Conduct for pharmacists.