



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

South Carolina Board of Nursing

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POSITION STATEMENT: Prescription Ordering for APRNs with Prescriptive Authority

FORMULATED: July 2003

REVISED: March 2019, September 2011

REVIEWED: March 2015

The Purpose of this position is to address inquiries regarding the status of telephone, electronic, and written prescriptions from Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) with prescriptive authority.

The South Carolina Pharmacy Act permits a registered pharmacist to accept a telephone, electronic, or faxed prescriptions from an APRN. APRNs have the option of utilizing the telephone for issuing a prescription or for authorizing a refill. It is recommended that the APRN communicate directly with the pharmacist when transmitting a prescription drug order. The prescribing APRN may authorize a licensed nurse to transmit a prescription drug order via telephone or facsimile provided the identity of the licensed nurse is included.

APRNs are not required to retain copies of prescriptions. All telephoned, written, verbal and electronic prescriptions must be documented in the patient's medical record, to include the name of the medication, dosage, quantity, directions for use and the number of refills.

Prescriptions received by a pharmacist from a patient must have (a) an original signature of a practitioner or (b) electronic signature and be printed on paper that supplies security features preventing duplication or modification.

South Carolina Code Section 44-53-360, Tamper-resistant prescription pads, has recently added additional requirements to written prescriptions. This section states:

(1) A written prescription for any Schedule II, III, IV, and V controlled substance must be written on tamper-resistant prescription pads which contain one or more industry-recognized features designed to prevent all of the following:

(A) unauthorized copying of a completed or blank prescription form;

(B) erasure or modification of information written on the prescription by the prescriber; and

(C) use of counterfeit prescription forms.

(2) Prescription orders transmitted by facsimile, orally, or electronically are exempt from

the tamper-resistant prescription pad requirements of this section.

(3) The tamper-resistant prescription pad requirements do not apply to refill prescriptions of an original written prescription that was presented to a pharmacy before the effective date of this act.

(4) The exceptions set forth in Section 1927(k)(3) of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 1396r-8(k)(3), concerning nursing facilities, hospitals, and other institutional and clinical settings, are exempt from the tamper-resistant prescription pad requirements of this section.

(5) If a written prescription is not submitted on a tamper-resistant prescription form meeting the requirements of this section, a pharmacy may fill the prescription in full as written on an emergency basis as long as the pharmacy receives a verbal, facsimile, electronic, or compliant written prescription from the prescriber within seventy-two hours after the date on which the prescription was filled.

South Carolina Code Section § 44-53-360

Policy and Procedure #66 from the Board of Pharmacy allows the use of electronic signatures. APRNs may use electronic signatures for legend non-controlled medications. Rubber stamps are not acceptable.

Electronic signatures are only permissible on prescriptions sent directly from a practitioner to a pharmacy via electronic transfer and cannot be modified in any way. Electronic prescriptions must designate the individual APRN prescriber name, credential, prescribing number, and practice location, and if possible, the physician's contact information, recognizing practice location recognizing some electronic systems do not transmit the additional physician's name and prescribing number. Prescriptions must designate the APRN as the prescriber, rather than as a verbal or telephone order from the physician.

A pharmacist may dispense a controlled substance listed in schedules III, IV, or V pursuant to an oral prescription made by an individual practitioner and promptly reduced to writing by the pharmacist containing all information required for a valid prescription except for the signature of the practitioner.

A pharmacist may dispense a Schedule II controlled substance only pursuant to a written prescription signed by the practitioner, except in an emergency situation. In a bona fide emergency, a practitioner may telephone a Schedule II prescription to the pharmacist who may then dispense the prescription. The prescribing practitioner must provide a written and signed prescription to the pharmacy within seven days and meet the below requirements.

1. The drug prescribed and dispensed must be limited to the amount needed to treat the patient during the emergency period. Prescribing or dispensing beyond the emergency period must be pursuant to a written prescription order.



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2. The prescription order must be immediately reduced to writing by the pharmacist and must contain all information, except for the prescribing practitioner's signature.
3. If the prescribing individual practitioner is not known to the pharmacist, he/she must make a reasonable effort to determine that the oral authorization came from a registered individual practitioner, which may include a call back to the prescribing individual practitioner using his or her telephone number as listed in the telephone directory and/or other good faith efforts to insure his or her identity.
4. Within seven days after authorizing an emergency telephone prescription, the prescribing practitioner must furnish the pharmacist a written, signed prescription for the controlled substance prescribed. The prescription must have written on its face "Authorization for Emergency Dispensing" and the date of the oral order.

A prescription may be directly transmitted orally or electronically from the practitioner or his "designated agent" to the pharmacy. The "designated agent" is a ". . . person employed by an authorized practitioner to transmit, either orally or electronically, a prescription drug order on behalf of the authorized practitioner to the pharmacist. The authorized practitioner accepts responsibility for the correct transmission of the prescription drug order." S.C. Code § 40-43-30(11).