



## Veterinary Practice Board of Western Australia



### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT WRITING PRESCRIPTIONS

#### **As a veterinarian, how do I write a prescription?**

A veterinary prescription must include the following information:

- a) the name, address and telephone number of the prescribing veterinarian;
- b) the date on which it is issued;
- c) the species of animal to be treated and the name and address of the person who has care of the animal;
- d) a description that includes the quantity, dose, strength, frequency and form of each medicine that is to be supplied;
- e) precise directions for use of each medicine that is to be supplied;
- f) if the document provides for the medicine to be supplied on more than one occasion — the maximum number of times it may be supplied; **NOTE:** veterinarians are not permitted to specify repeats in prescriptions for s8 medicines;
- g) the words “For veterinary use only” or “For animal treatment only”; and
- h) signature of the prescriber – must be signed in ink by the prescriber.

A prescription must not be for the supply of both a medicine that is a Schedule 4 poison and a medicine that is a Schedule 8 poison.

Further information for the Requirements for prescriptions in Western Australia, can be found [here](#).

#### **If an owner requests that I provide them with a prescription for a Schedule 4 or 8 medicine that I have supplied for their animal, must I provide one?**

The Board recommends that you provide prescriptions on request but there is no legal obligation to do so.

#### **Can I charge for writing a prescription?**

There is nothing to prevent a veterinarian from charging a reasonable amount for writing a prescription.

#### **Do I need a special prescription pad?**

No. Veterinarians are not issued with prescription pads. The prescription may be written on any suitable paper or letterhead. If handwritten it should be legible.

#### **Am I allowed to write a prescription for an owner to fill with an online pharmacy?**

When you write a prescription you are not able to specify where it should be filled. There is no issue with an owner filling a prescription with a registered online Australian pharmacy. However, caution should be used when an owner expresses an intention to use an overseas online pharmacy. All

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veterinary medicines used in Australia must be registered with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority and there are penalties for importing unregistered veterinary medicines. For further information see <http://apvma.gov.au/node/18511>.

**Am I permitted to fill a prescription written by another veterinarian without examining the animal?**  
No. In WA only a registered pharmacist can fill a prescription on behalf of a veterinarian.

**Is a veterinarian required to examine an animal prior to supplying or prescribing a scheduled drug for an animal when another veterinarian working at the same veterinary practice has previously supplied or prescribed that drug for that animal?**

There are two scenarios where a veterinarian may supply or prescribe a scheduled drug for an animal they have not examined if another veterinarian working at the same veterinary practice business or a specialist has prescribed or supplied a scheduled drug for the animal within the last 12 months.

**Scenario 1:** the first veterinarian or specialist authorises further treatment with the drug by stating in the clinical record that further treatment with the drug would or might be indicated.

**NOTE:** In this scenario the first veterinarian or specialist is responsible for the subsequent supply or prescription of the scheduled drug.

**Scenario 2:** where there is no such entry in the clinical record the following conditions apply

- a. the second veterinarian must have discussed the health of the animal with the person in charge of the animal within the previous 7 days; and
- b. have reasonable grounds to believe the examination of the animal is not necessary.

**NOTE:** In this scenario the second veterinarian is responsible for the supply or prescription of the scheduled drug.

**Can a veterinarian working for the same veterinary practice business prescribe or supply more of a scheduled drug that a veterinarian working at a different physical veterinary premises that is part of the same veterinary practice business?**

As long as the physical veterinary premises' share the same practice management system and can access the patient's clinical records, the second veterinarian can prescribe or supply the scheduled drug as per the previous question.

**When supplying or prescribing further treatment with a scheduled drug, can veterinarians discuss the health of the animal with the person in charge of the animal via email instead of via phone or in person? Can this be a template reception send with all veterinarians' names at the bottom?**

Communication with the person in charge can be via email but the veterinarian responsible for supplying or dispensing the scheduled drug must consider the email response. A template may be used but the onus is on the veterinarian to ensure that they have sufficient information about the health of the animal before supplying more of the scheduled drug.

**If there is a script on file (such as on a prescription manager) on the practice management system, can either veterinarians or veterinary nurses dispense this medication that has previously been prescribed?**

No, only a pharmacist may dispense scheduled drugs from a prescription.

**For repeat supply of chronic/long term scheduled medications (eg gabapentin, meds for stable seizure patients), can they be supplied as long as the patient has been seen within its required revisit?**

The maximum time between physical examinations when scheduled drugs are being supplied is 12 months. For some conditions and drugs, more frequent examinations are necessary.