



Reporting Drug Dependent and Oversupplied Persons

The *Medicines and Poisons Act 2014* requires a health professional to notify the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Department of Health within 48 hours, where they reasonably believe a person is drug dependent or oversupplied. Reports are made by completing the approved Reporting a Drug Dependent Person or Reporting an Oversupplied Person form.

Patients entering treatment for dependency through the Community Program for Opioid Pharmacotherapy (CPOP) or undergoing detoxification treatment with opioids for drug dependence are automatically included on the Record.

Definitions

Drug dependent person refers to a person who has acquired, as a result of repeated administration of drugs of addiction (Schedule 8 medicine or Schedule 4 medicine monitored through ScriptCheckWA) or Schedule 9 poisons, an overpowering desire for the continued administration of a drug of addiction or a Schedule 9 poison.

Oversupplied person refers to a person who has over a period of time obtained, or obtained prescriptions for, quantities of drugs of addiction that are greater than is reasonably necessary for therapeutic use.

Criteria for a drug dependent person

A person may be drug dependent when they:

- undertake regular use of illicit drugs or misuse of pharmaceutical drugs;
- describe cravings or strong desires to use these substances;
- require increased amounts of these substances to satisfy cravings or create desired effect;
- escalate doses without endorsement or seek additional prescriptions without informing the primary prescriber;
- exhibit withdrawal symptoms or signs of intoxication;
- display physical signs of damage from administering a drug, such as track marks;
- experience social, occupational or physical problems associated with the use of these substances
- experience a deterioration in function at work or home caused by the misuse of prescription or illicit drugs;
- provide a urine drug screen that shows a positive result for illicit drugs or medicines that are not prescribed.

Refer to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – 5th Edition (DSM-5) for further information around the clinical diagnosis of dependence.

Criteria for an oversupplied person

A person may be oversupplied when they:

- appear to doctor shop, have attended multiple prescribers and medical practices, or obtained an excessive number of prescriptions;
- are found (or alleged) to be selling or diverting medicines; and / or
- have forged prescriptions or used false pretences to obtain prescriptions.

How to report

A report is made by completing the approved Reporting a Drug Dependent Person or Reporting an Oversupplied Person form.

Practitioners making a report are encouraged to discuss this with the person and provide the person with the Department of Health patient information leaflet, "Reporting a Drug Dependent Person" or "Reporting an Oversupplied Person". The person can sign the acknowledgement section on the report form; however, this is optional.

The Act requires that the Department of Health contacts the person advising of the receipt of the report and providing opportunity to show why the person should not be included on the Record. The source of the report is not disclosed.

After this process, the CEO of Health will decide whether or not to include the name of the person on the Drugs of Addiction Record as an oversupplied or drug dependent person.

Being on the Record

For those on the Record, prior written authorisation is required from the CEO of Health before a prescriber may prescribe a Schedule 8 medicine. Appropriate consultant support is required before an application for authorisation will be considered (conditions may be imposed on prescribing or dispensing).

When prescribing Schedule 4 monitored medicines for a person on the Record, the prescriber must document a management plan, to mitigate the risks associated with these medicines.

A health practitioner may administer doses of Schedule 8 medicines to a person on the Record, such as in the event of a medical emergency or if the person is a hospital inpatient.

Information on the Record is for medical treatment only and is only made available to prescribers and pharmacists when necessary for the treatment of the patient. It is not available to employers, police or other Government agencies.

Removal from the Record

A record of drug dependency or oversupply may be removed from the Record in the following circumstances:

- the person referred to in the record has died;
- to correct an error or omission;
- if the record is not accurate or up to date, including:
 - the person has been drug-free for 2 years. The person or a medical practitioner acting on their behalf must apply to the Department of Health providing supporting evidence; or
 - the person has no direct or indirect contact with the Department, in relation to their use of drugs of addiction, for a period of 5 years.

More information

For more information visit the Department of Health website or email:

MPRB@health.wa.gov.au.

Prescribers can also contact the Monitored Medicines Prescriber Advisory Line on 9222 4424 (Monday to Friday 08:30 to 16:30, excluding public holidays)

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This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

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