

On April 29, 2020, a hearing of the Adjudication Tribunal of the Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board (NLPB) was held in the matter of a Complaint against a pharmacist registrant (Respondent). At the hearing the Adjudication Tribunal considered and accepted an Admission Statement by the Respondent, an Agreed Statement of Facts, and a Joint Submission on disciplinary measures, all of which were agreed to by the Respondent and the Registrar of the NLPB.

In the Agreed Statement of Facts, the Respondent acknowledged that a patient dropped off a prescription for the Estalis Patch 50/150 µg, and the prescription was erroneously filled as Estradot 50 µg (estradiol 50 µg). It is suspected that the prescription was entered incorrectly as Estradot 50 µg as the first generic medication that came up upon search, following which the Respondent made an error in completing her final check and prescription release procedures, thus dispensing the wrong medication to the patient. The error was not picked up upon patient counselling as the use, side effects, and general indication of both patches are similar.

When the patient returned with a new prescription several months later for the same medication with a new dose – Estalis 50/250 µg, the prescription was again erroneously filled as Estradot 50 µg. It is again surmised that the prescription was entered as estradiol 50 µg as it matched what the patient was previously taking. The Respondent again made an error in completing her final check and prescription release procedures and the wrong medication was again dispensed to the patient. After this dispense, the patient noticed that her new patches looked the same as the old ones when she was expecting new ones, and upon returning to speak to the pharmacist the error was discovered.

Once the error was discovered, the Respondent immediately contacted the prescribing physician and addressed the error with the patient. When the matter was brought to NLPB, the Respondent was fully co-operative and acknowledged the errors. The Respondent pleaded guilty and admitted that her actions violated section 35(c) of the *Pharmacy Act, 2012*, section 85(a) of the *NLPB By-laws*, and section 3.7 of the *NLPB Standards of Pharmacy Operation – Community Pharmacy*.

The Adjudication Tribunal accepted the Respondent's guilty plea and the Joint Submission on Penalty and ordered as follows:

- a. That the Respondent be reprimanded;
- b. That the Respondent write a brief reflection on why the errors occurred and what has been done on an individual professional level to ensure these types of errors do not occur again;
- c. That the Respondent provide written documentation to NLPB regarding any policy, procedure, or training improvements that are, or have been, identified as required in the pharmacy in relation to preventing medication errors as well as what steps are, or have been, taken to implement such improvements, as appropriate;
- d. That the Respondent complete an Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada course on *Medication safety: Incident analysis and proactive risk assessment*, or another course deemed suitable and approved by the Registrar;
- e. That the Respondent pays a contribution towards the costs of the hearing.