



Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board

Interpretation Guide

Prohibition on Inducements (Companion to the NLPB Code of Ethics) Approved March 5, 2021

1) Introduction

The Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board Code of Ethics¹ states that, registrants do not offer inducements to any person or entity that are conditional on or related to a patient obtaining medications or services from the registrant.

In this context,

- a) “inducements” includes, but is not limited to:
 - i) Points, or other loyalty program mechanisms, that can be redeemed for cash, gifts, prizes, rewards, or other goods or services,
 - ii) coupons,
 - iii) discounts, rebates, and refunds,
 - iv) gifts, including gifts of cash,
 - v) goods or prizes, or
 - vi) other rewards.
- b) “medications” includes, but is not limited to:
 - i) any drug, product, or device, when provided pursuant to a prescription, or
 - ii) schedule II drugs, whether provided pursuant to a prescription or not.
- c) “services” includes, but is not limited to:
 - i) preparation and provision of prescriptions,
 - ii) transferring prescriptions to and receiving prescriptions from other pharmacies,
 - iii) prescribing,
 - iv) administering inhalations or injections, or
 - v) specialized services such as Opioid Agonist Maintenance Therapy, customized packaging, specialized compounding, and provision of service to personal care homes or long-term care facilities.

2) Expectations

As stated in the Code of Ethics, registrants are not to offer or provide inducements to patients that are conditional on or related to the patient obtaining medications or services from the registrant.

Section 85. of the NLPB Bylaws² goes on to state that “professional misconduct for the purposes of considering an allegation or a complaint and the institution of disciplinary proceedings includes but is not limited to... breach of the Code of Ethics or standards of practice approved by the board.”

As such, the provision of an inducement could be considered professional misconduct and, therefore, may be regarded as constituting conduct deserving of sanction.

3) Exclusions:

This prohibition does NOT apply to:

- a) schedule III medications, when not provided pursuant to a prescription,
- b) products or services that are not “medications” or “services” (as defined above), or
- c) accepting payment for a medication or service by a credit or debit card that is linked to an incentive, awards or loyalty program.

¹ See NLPB Code of Ethics. Available at: <https://nlpb.ca/pharmacy-practice/standards-guidelines-policies/>

² The current version of the NLPB Bylaws can be found at: <https://nlpb.ca/pharmacy-practice/legislation/>