

Newfoundland and Labrador Pharmacy Board Standards of Practice



Facsimile Transmission of Prescriptions and Personal Health Information

September 2015

Revised August 2020

1) Introduction

Standards of Practice are minimum standards that all registrants are expected to meet. Regardless of position or practice environment, when a registrant performs a specific role, they must perform it to the level specified in the Standards of Practice and meet all of the standards associated with that role. These Standards describe the minimum expectations for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in accepting prescriptions that have been transmitted to the pharmacy by facsimile from the prescriber as well as in sending patients' personal health information to other custodians for the purposes of prescription transfer or continuity of care.

2) Requirements

- a) Prescriptions transmitted via fax must be sent only to a pharmacy of the patient's choice.
- b) Prescriptions transmitted via fax must be sent directly from the prescriber's office, prescriber's computer, a health institution for a patient of that institution, or from another location, provided that the pharmacist is confident of the prescription's legitimacy.
- c) Prescriptions transmitted via fax must include all pertinent prescription details, as well as:
 - i) name and fax number of the pharmacy intended to receive the transmission;
 - ii) name and fax number of the sender; and
 - iii) time and date of transmission.
- d) When receiving a prescription that was transmitted via fax, the registrant is responsible for verifying the origin of the transmission and the authenticity of the prescription.
 - i) If necessary, he or she may need to confirm authenticity by contacting a person at the site of transmission who can verify the transmission of the prescription, or the prescriber, if necessary.
 - ii) A pharmacist may use his/her professional judgment to provide a short-term supply of a medication to an individual, if he or she is unable to verify the faxed prescription within a reasonable time frame and the individual for whom the prescription is written will suffer undue hardship.
- e) As outlined in the *Standards of Pharmacy Operation*, prescription transfer information may be sent via fax as long as the transmitted document contains all information required for a transfer including:
 - i) identity of the transferring pharmacist or pharmacy technician;
 - ii) name and address of the originating pharmacy;
 - iii) identity of the receiving pharmacist or pharmacy technician; and
 - iv) name and address of the receiving pharmacy.
- f) When sending prescriptions or other personal health information via fax, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians must be sure that the fax number being used is correct and that the transmission is being sent to the intended recipient. If a privacy breach was to occur and information was inadvertently transmitted to the incorrect recipient, this must be communicated to the patient, in accordance with the *Personal Health Information Act (PHIA)*.
- g) A prescription received by facsimile transmission in accordance with these Standards may be considered to be equivalent to a written prescription.