



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PRESCRIBERS

Conditions on authorisations issued under Section 59 E of the *Poisons Act 1971* are mandatory, not voluntary, for the life of the authorisation

In a busy medical practice it is sometimes easy to overlook the legal requirements applying to the prescribing and supply of Schedule 8 medications. However failure to fulfil legal obligations can lead to concerns and professional practice issues, particularly in the case of deception involving drug seeking.

Practitioners would be aware that under Section 59E of the *Poisons Act 1971* certain medications can only be prescribed (i.e. made available) for continuous use for a prescribed maximum period. These drugs can only be made available for a longer period than the prescribed maximum period of 2 months if the Secretary authorises that extended use under Section 59E of the *Poisons Act 1971*.

Before a decision is made, the applications are referred to a medically based expert panel of advisors to provide information, advice and/or recommendations in relation to whether or not a particular authorisation should be issued or under what conditions it should be issued.

If an authorisation is issued with particular conditions these conditions are for the term of the authorisation. Conditions relating to supervised dosing and dispensing intervals MUST APPEAR ON EVERY SCHEDULE 8 PRESCRIPTION WRITTEN. Failure to do this may result in SERIOUS patient harm.

These conditions are not imposed lightly but as a matter of public and patient safety. They are mandatory not voluntary. Failure to fulfil legal obligations can lead to concerns and professional practice issues particularly in the case of deception involving drug seeking. Non compliance with conditions may also result in further applications being refused.

For further information please contact:

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