Sale of Schedule 3 first aid medicines by pharmacists

March 2018

Target audience: Pharmacists

Purpose

This fact sheet informs pharmacists of recent changes to the Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996 (HDPR) regarding sale of Schedule 3 (S3) adrenaline auto-injectors and S3 salbutamol and terbutaline.

Background

The HDPR provides the authorisations for, and controls over, the use and supply of medicines and poisons in Queensland. Previously pharmacists were authorised to sell S3 medicines for the treatment of specific individuals (where the medicines are labelled with that person’s name), S3 salbutamol and terbutaline to first aiders trained in asthma management, and S3 medicines to ship’s masters for first aid use.

Issues

- An amendment to section 277 of the HDPR has extended the circumstances under which a pharmacist in Queensland is permitted to sell S3 medicines to people for the purposes of providing first aid or stocking and maintaining a first-aid kit.
- Pharmacists are now lawfully also able to sell S3 salbutamol and terbutaline and S3 adrenaline in a pre-loaded auto-injector to:
  - a person who has completed an asthma management course approved by the Department of Health for use in asthma first aid (section 256B of the HDPR);
  - a person who holds an approval to administer these medicines issued under section 18(1) of the HDPR (for example first-aid officers at universities);
  - a principal of an educational institute (or a person nominated by the principal);
  - a Queensland approved provider of a QEC approved service (or a person appointed as a supervisor for the service under the Education and Care Services Act 2013);
  - an approved provider of an education and care service under the Education and Care Services National Law (Queensland) (or a person nominated as a supervisor by the approved provider).
- A pharmacist must be reasonably satisfied that the purchaser holds this authority. Evidence of a person’s authority to purchase could include a letter from a child care centre or school nominating the person as an approved purchaser on behalf of the centre or school. Alternatively, a first aider may provide a completion certificate from an approved asthma management course or a copy of their Queensland Health approval.
- This sale of these medicines is exempt from the requirement to attach a label to the container under sections 277(3-6) of the HDPR.
For more information

For information about approved asthma management courses and using asthma relievers in providing first aid see these fact sheets:

- Asthma management courses
- Use of blue/grey reliever medication to provide asthma first aid at schools, workplaces and community events

For further information, please contact Medicines Regulation and Quality at: MRQ@health.qld.gov.au