

# General Approval (Emergency First Aid) – Standing Orders

## Medicines and Poisons Act 2019 - Factsheet

### Who is this factsheet and template for?

This factsheet is intended to assist a person holding or making application to hold, a general approval for emergency first aid to understand requirements about standing orders (for these approvals).

**Note:** It is not mandatory to use the accompanying standing order template, rather, it provides an example of a standing order specific to a general approval (emergency first aid).

### Background and relevant legislation

The *Medicines and Poisons Act 2019* (**MPA**) provides that a *general approval* is an approval that authorises a person to carry out a regulated activity with a regulated substance stated in the approval. The *Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation 2021* (**MPMR**) prescribes one type of general approval as a general approval (emergency first aid).

Schedule 16, Part 2 of the MPMR specifies the persons, activities and medicines authorised under a general approval (emergency first aid). The schedule authorises certain classes of persons under the approval (registered nurses and paramedics) to administer specific medicines under a **standing order** from a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner. Classes of persons may have separate training and qualifications and be restricted to certain medicines in accordance with that training.

A 'standing order' is defined in the dictionary of the MPA as:

*standing order*, for a medicine, means a document authorising the medicine to be administered or given as a treatment dose at a stated place or in stated circumstances.

A standard condition under section 34 of the MPMR requires the holder of a general approval (emergency first aid) to appoint a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner (each a prescriber).

Section 104 of the MPMR allows a prescriber to make a standing order for the administration of a medicine for a place or circumstance authorised under a general approval (emergency first aid). A prescriber under this approval type is limited to a medical practitioner or a nurse practitioner.

Section 105 of the MPMR only allows a prescriber to make a standing order where they are reasonably satisfied that:

- (a) the order would not allow a person to administer or give a treatment dose of a medicine in a way that exceeds the person's authorisation or training; and
- (b) action taken under the order would be likely to improve the timeliness of treatment and access to care by patients or animals at the place.

The standing order must only apply in relation to one (1) medicine.

Section 106 of the MPMR sets out the required content of a standing order. A template for a standing order for a general approval (emergency first aid) has been developed to include the mandatory requirements provided in the MPMR.

Section 107 of the MPMR further requires standing orders for a general approval (emergency first aid) to state that a person proposing to administer a medicine under the order must first attempt to contact the

prescriber or another person authorised to prescribe the medicine, before administering. The standing order must also state that this requirement does not apply in relation to:

- (a) administration in urgent situations requiring immediate treatment of a patient or an animal; or
- (b) administration of 1 of the following medicines:
  - (i) adrenaline (epinephrine);
  - (ii) glyceryl trinitrate;
  - (iii) glucagon;
  - (iv) naloxone;
  - (v) nitrous oxide;
  - (vi) methoxyflurane;
  - (vii) salbutamol.

## Making a standing order

In addition to the specific content requirements, all standing orders must be made in writing and must be signed by the prescriber.

Only paramedics and registered nurses working at a site for an approval can administer an emergency medicine on an oral prescription or a standing order made under the approval.

The general approval (emergency first aid) standing order template includes the specific content requirements that must be included in a standing order to be used under such an approval.

## Medicines permitted under the standing order

Schedule 16, Part 2 of the MPMR describes the specific medicines allowed under a general approval (emergency first aid). A standing order must be made for each medicine that the approval holder will or intends to administer under the approval.

An emergency medicine, in relation to a general approval (emergency first aid), means each of the following medicines—

adrenaline (epinephrine)	glyceryl trinitrate	midazolam
atropine	hydrocortisone	morphine
benzatropine	ipratropium bromide monohydrate	naloxone
ceftriaxone	lidocaine (lignocaine)	nitrous oxide
furosemide (frusemide)	methoxyflurane	promethazine
glucagon	metoclopramide	salbutamol

## Inspection and review

In accordance with section 108 of the MPMR, a prescriber must take all reasonable steps to ensure a standing order made by the prescriber is available for inspection at a place to which the order relates by:

- (a) any person who may administer a medicine under the order; and
- (b) the prescriber's employer; and
- (c) the chief executive (or delegate); and
- (d) an inspector; and
- (e) a health ombudsman official.

Section 106(2)(m) of the MPMR requires a standing order template to contain a date, which must be no later than 2 years after the standing order is made, by which it must be reviewed.

## Definitions

Term	Meaning
Standing order, for a medicine	means a document authorising the medicine to be administered or given as a treatment dose at a stated place or in stated circumstances.
Administer a medicine	means— (a) introduce a dose of the medicine into the body of a person or animal by any means; or (b) give a dose of the medicine to a person to be taken immediately. Examples of administering a medicine— <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• injecting a medicine into the body of a person or animal</li><li>• putting cream on the skin of a person or animal</li><li>• putting drops into the eyes of a person or animal</li><li>• handing a dose of tablets to a person for the person to swallow immediately</li></ul> Administer, a medicine, does not include dispensing the medicine.
Give a treatment dose	of a medicine, means give 1 or more doses of the medicine to a person to be taken by a particular person, or administered to an animal, at a later time.
Site	in relation to a general approval (emergency first aid), means— (a) a place at which an event, notified to the chief executive by the holder of the approval under section 35 of the MPMR, takes place; or (b) a place stated in the approval.
First aid provider	means a person who has a current certificate granted by a registered training organisation for the provision of first aid.
Paramedic	means a person registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as being qualified to practise as a paramedic.
Registered nurse	means a person who is registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law to practise in the registered nurses division of the nursing profession.

## Contact us

For further information about this factsheet, please contact the Healthcare Approvals and Regulation Unit at [HARU@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:HARU@health.qld.gov.au).