



Prescribing Tip No. 185 Date: 7th December 2017

Controlled drugs (CDs) – Length of treatment/quantity on a FP10 Prescription



Controlled Drugs Prescribing Reports are monitored on a six monthly basis by the **Medicines Management Group of the CCG** who regularly review the Controlled Drug prescribing by each practice.

Where prescribing is outside of the **national average** for injectable Controlled Drugs or schedule 2 Controlled Drugs, practices will be contacted by letter and asked to

- ❖ Confirm the validity of the data by checking that it corresponds with the levels of prescribing recorded at your practice.
- ❖ Detail the circumstances where these specific instances of Controlled Drugs have been used and the systems in place to demonstrate that the patient is being adequately monitored and regularly reviewed.

Length of treatment of CDs

There is a **good practice requirement** that the quantity of Schedule 2, 3 and 4 CDs be **limited to a quantity for up to 30 days treatment**. In cases where the prescriber believes that a prescription should be issued for a longer period they may do so, but will need to be able to justify that there is a clinical need and that it would not cause an unacceptable risk to patient safety. Pharmacists are able to dispense Schedule 2, 3 and 4 CD prescriptions ordering a supply of more than 30 days' supply.

CD Repeat Prescribing

When prescribing a repeat prescription of a controlled drug for treating a long-term condition in primary care, take into account the controlled drug and the person's individual circumstances to determine the frequency of review for further repeat prescriptions.

Validity of CD forms

Prescriptions for Schedule 2, 3 and 4 CDs are only valid for 28 days. The 28 day period of validity runs from the date the prescription was signed unless the prescriber has specified a start date on the prescription.

Repeat dispensing of CDs

Schedule 2 and 3 CDs **cannot** be prescribed on repeat dispensing prescriptions. Repeat dispensing prescriptions for Schedule 4 CDs must be dispensed for the first time within 28 days of the appropriate date. After the first dispensing the repeats are legally valid within the normal periods of validity of the repeatable prescription.

Useful links:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/NG46/chapter/Recommendations#prescribing-controlled-drugs>
<http://psnc.org.uk/dispensing-supply/dispensing-controlled-drugs/controlled-drug-prescription-forms-validity/>

To contact the Medicines Optimisation Team please phone 01772 214302