



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

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AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

To: All Community Pharmacists
Directors of Pharmaceutical Services of Boards and
Trusts
All dentists

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Dear Colleague

SELF-PRESCRIBING OR PRESCRIBING FOR SOMEONE CLOSE TO YOU

Your attention is drawn to the relevant professional guidance on self-prescribing or prescribing for someone close to you.

GMC Guidance – (www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/current/library/prescriptions_faqs.asp)

1. “Doctors should, wherever possible, avoid treating themselves or anyone with whom they have a close personal relationship and should be registered with a GP outside their family. Controlled drugs can present particular problems, occasionally resulting in a loss of objectivity leading to drug misuse and misconduct.
2. You should not prescribe a controlled drug for yourself or someone close to you unless:
 - a. No other person with the legal right to prescribe is available to assess the patient’s clinical condition and to prescribe without a delay which would put the patient’s life or health at risk, or cause the patient unacceptable pain, and
 - b. That the treatment is immediately necessary to:
 - i. Save life
 - ii. Avoid serious deterioration in the patient’s health, or
 - iii. Alleviate otherwise uncontrollable pain.
3. You must be able to justify your actions and must record your relationship and the emergency circumstances that necessitated your prescribing a controlled drug for yourself or someone close to you”.

Nursing and Midwifery Council Guidance – (Standards of proficiency for nurse and midwife prescribers – www.nmc-uk.org)

4. “You must not prescribe a controlled drug for yourself.
5. You may only prescribe a controlled drug for someone close to you if:
 - a. No other person with a legal right to prescribe is available;
 - b. And only then, if that treatment is immediately necessary to:
 - i. save life
 - ii. avoid significant deterioration in the patient/client’s health
 - iii. alleviate otherwise uncontrollable pain.
6. You must be able to justify your actions and must document your relationship and the emergency circumstances that necessitated your prescribing a controlled drug for someone close to you.”

General Dental Council Guidance – (Standards for Dental Professionals – www.gdc-uk.org)

7. “If you believe that patients might be at risk because of your health, behaviour or professional performance, or that of a colleague, or because any aspect of the clinical environment, you should take action. You can get advice from appropriate colleagues, or a professional organisation or your defence organisation. If at any time you are not sure how to continue, contact us.”
8. The GDC issued a statement in August 2005 which states “Part of prescribing drugs responsibly means prescribing only where you are able to form an objective view of your patient’s health and clinical needs. Everyone needs objective clinical advice and treatment. Dentists who prescribe for themselves or those close to them may not be able to remain objective and risk overlooking serious problems, encouraging or tolerating addiction, or interfering with care or treatment provided by other healthcare professionals. Other than in emergencies, you should not therefore prescribe drugs for yourself or for anyone with whom you have a close personal or emotional relationship.”

If you have any queries on these matters please contact your relevant professional body.

Yours sincerely



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