

Prescribing Dangerous Drugs and the Law (Part 2)

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The guidelines also require the prescription form to be signed and dated by the prescribing practitioner on the date of issue; that it contains only one dangerous drug and/or drug preparation containing a controlled chemical; and that it is issued in triplicate copies with specific direction of use.¹⁴ The triplicate copy (specifically marked as triplicate copy on the face of the prescription) will be retained by the prescribing practitioner.¹⁵

However, not all dangerous drugs are required to be prescribed in the "Special Prescription Form for dangerous drugs". Under Board Resolution no. 1 (2014)¹⁶ all oral forms of FDA-registered drug preparations in Philippine Schedule¹⁷ no. 4 and no. 5 are exempted from the Special Prescription Form for dangerous drugs but must be prescribed in an ordinary prescription in triplicate copies. In addition, "where the need for treatment is urgent in an emergency case, and when a "special prescription is not available" an ordinary prescription may be used and shall be acted upon by the licensed seller.¹⁸ Furthermore, an "Authorization for Emergency Dispensing," must be legibly written on the face of the prescription. The drug prescribed and dispensed must be limited to the quantity needed to treat the patient during the emergency period.¹⁹

A S-2 licensed medical practitioner shall prescribe only FDA-registered dangerous drugs for patient use in any medically-needed and reasonable quantity that is determined by documented clinical need or recommended in the Philippine National Formulary (PNF), Physician Desk Reference, medical books or in the usual dosage as set forth in published professional medical references.²⁰

It is also prohibited to prescribe, administer, or otherwise provide, or cause to be provided any dangerous drug to a person who the practitioner has never personally physically examined and diagnosed except in institutional settings and on-call situations.²¹ Medicines prescribed for an individual patient must be supplied to, and used by that patient only.²² A medical practitioner must not use patient-specific dangerous drug prescriptions to replace or 'top-up' their bags for home visits even if the stock was used for that patient initially.²³

Prescribing and dispensing of parenteral form of dangerous drugs shall be for administration to patients in PDEA-licensed hospitals and other institutions authorized by the Department of Health as institutional dispensers under their care, or in temporary field hospitals during emergency situation, or in homes where the patient has an attending physician and a nurse.²⁴

The amount or number of dangerous drug to be

prescribed is also limited per prescription. Ordinarily, a PDEA licensed practitioner may prescribe a dangerous drug for patient use for up to thirty (30)-day supply of Philippine Schedules 2, 3, and 4 dangerous drugs per prescription.²⁵

However, in extraordinary circumstances, when a PDEA licensed practitioner considers more than thirty (30) days is clinically indicated, he may issue multi-month prescriptions, not exceeding thirty (30) days supply per prescription or a total of ninety (90) days supply for drugs in Schedule IV, all dated on the day of issue and with written instructions on the second prescription of when to obtain the medicine. In such cases, the prescriber shall indicate on the face of the prescription, the number of prescriptions issued to the patient i.e. one of 3 Rx, two of 3Rx and three of 3 Rx.²⁶ Take note that under the guidelines the maximum amount per prescription shall not exceed a thirty (30) day supply. It does not limit the actual number of tablets, capsule and bottles of syrup or suspension (not parenteral preparations) as long as it is therapeutically necessary for a thirty (30) day period.

References

14. Section 31. Prescriptions, (2); [Dangerous Drug] Board Regulation No. 1 Series of 2014
15. Id.
16. Article II [Classification] Section 4 [Preparations] (4)
17. Annex A – Philippines Schedules of Dangerous Drugs; [Dangerous Drug] Board Regulation No. 1 Series of 2014: Schedule I dangerous drugs mean it has no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the Philippines and lack of accepted safety for use of the drug under medical supervision. Schedule II dangerous drugs mean it may have currently accepted medical use in treatment in the Philippines and have high potential for abuse that may lead to severe psychological or physical dependence. Schedule III dangerous drugs mean it has a currently accepted medical use in treatment in the Philippines and have a potential for abuse but less than the drug in schedules 1 and 2 that may lead to moderate or low physical dependence or high psychological dependence. Schedule IV dangerous drugs mean it has a currently accepted medical use in treatment in the Philippines and have a low potential for abuse less than the drug in schedule 3 that may lead to limited physical dependence or psychological dependence. Schedule V dangerous drugs mean it has a currently accepted medical use in treatment in the Philippines and have potential for abuse that may lead to from low to high psychological or physical dependence. It is considered a dangerous drug only in the Philippines.
18. Section 33. Prescribing and Filling of an Order in Emergency Situation, (1) (a); [Dangerous Drug] Board Regulation No. 1 Series of 2014
19. Id. "Where the need for treatment is urgent in an emergency case, and when a special prescription is not available, an ordinary prescription may be used and shall be acted upon

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by the licensed seller. An “Authorization for Emergency Dispensing,” must be legibly written on the face of the prescription. The drug prescribed and dispensed must be limited to the quantity needed to treat the patient during the emergency period. The prescribing physician, dentist or veterinarian shall inform PDEA-CS or the Regional Office in writing where the emergency occurred, copy furnished the pharmacy that supplied the drug within seven days (7) after issuing such ordinary prescription. The pharmacy shall also inform the PDEA within seven (7) days after dispensing the dangerous drugs during the emergency situation. Such prescription should contain at its back of a statement of the date and nature of the emergency condition. The prescription should clearly state the full name and address of the patient, and the full name and signature of the prescribing person and such other information required under Section 31(4) of this regulation. The notification to PDEA may be delivered in person or by mail. If delivered by mail, it must be postmarked within the seven day period.”

20. Section 31. Prescriptions, 6 (a); [Dangerous Drug] Board Regulation No. 1 Series of 2014
21. Section 31. Prescriptions, 6 (c); [Dangerous Drug] Board Regulation No. 1 Series of 2014
22. Section 31. Prescriptions, 7; [Dangerous Drug] Board Regulation No. 1 Series of 2014
23. Id.
24. Section 31. Prescriptions, 6 (b); [Dangerous Drug] Board Regulation No. 1 Series of 2014
25. Section 31. Prescriptions, 6 (d); [Dangerous Drug] Board Regulation No. 1 Series of 2014
26. Section 31. Prescriptions, 6 (d [i][1]); [Dangerous Drug] Board Regulation No. 1 Series of 2014