



The Manitoba Pharmaceutical Association

187 ST. MARY'S ROAD · WINNIPEG, MB · R2H 1J2 · PHONE (204) 233-1411 · FAX (204) 237-3468
E-Mail info@mpha.mb.ca

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TO: NOTICE TO PHARMACY MANAGERS Emergency Contraception “Controversy”

Over the past couple weeks, there have been many media reports regarding Emergency Contraception medication and the role of the pharmacist. The reports have questioned the role of the pharmacist in providing safe and effective patient care while preserving the rights of the patient for access, confidentiality and, where they choose, anonymity.

While the MPhA has not received any reports of misconduct by pharmacists in the provision of Emergency Contraception care, the following information serves as an important reminder:

- All Schedule 2 medications require the professional consultation of the pharmacist.
- According to the regulations, the pharmacist needs to discuss with the patient the condition or symptoms to be treated by the Schedule 2 medication.
- Pharmacists providing the product and care must be knowledgeable about Emergency Contraception including the prevention and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, when referral to another health care professional or a law enforcement agency is necessary and the issues around the use of the product by a minor.
- The individual's identity is not required for the pharmacist to provide Schedule 2 medication and the pharmacist must be aware that patients may want, and have the right, to remain anonymous.
- Pharmacists should request only the minimum amount of health information necessary to satisfy their professional responsibility to provide care and ensure the appropriateness of the medication and may not need to record personal health information.
- Documentation of an individual receiving Emergency Contraception is only necessary when the individual wishes to have a third party pay for the medication, or when the individual wants the information recorded on their patient profile. Once health information is documented about an individual, it becomes personal health information and governed by privacy legislation, which requires the minimum amount of information be collected.
- A pharmacist or pharmacy that refuses to sell emergency contraception as a matter of conscience needs to plan a process to enable patients to access the medication.
- Patient confidentiality is required for all discussions with patients where personal information and/or personal health information is included.

Pharmacists are congratulated for their conduct, while under close scrutiny and challenge, in meeting the patient needs and maintaining an atmosphere of professional practice. For further information, pharmacists are encouraged to consult the Manitoba portion of the NAPRA website at www.napra.org. The Manitoba Pharmaceutical Association and the

Manitoba Ombudsman have combined efforts to issue a commentary on Emergency Contraception and the information collection requirements under *The Personal Health Information Act* (PHIA), available at www.ombudsman.mb.ca.

Ronald Guse, Registrar