

Important Notice from the Executive Officer: Submission of Monitored Drug Information to the Narcotics Monitoring System

May 8, 2012

Further to our notice issued on April 12, 2012, please be advised that the Narcotics Monitoring System (“NMS”) was activated on April 16, 2012 to collect and record information respecting all prescription narcotics and other controlled substances (“monitored drugs”) that are dispensed in Ontario.

The NMS will serve as a central database to enable reviews of prescribing and dispensing activities related to monitored drugs within the community health care sector. The NMS will collect dispensing data from pharmacies in relation to all monitored drugs irrespective of whether the prescription is paid for under a publicly funded drug program, through private insurance, or by cash. We are pleased to report that a majority of pharmacies have begun to submit dispensing information about monitored drugs to the NMS.

This notice is to inform health care professionals that, effective May 14, 2012, all dispensers/pharmacies will be required to submit prescription information to the NMS for monitored drugs dispensed in Ontario pursuant to section 8 of the *Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act, 2010*.

A dispenser/pharmacy is required to submit all of the following information to the NMS when dispensing a monitored drug:

- Prescriber’s registration number issued to the prescriber by the College of which he or she is a member
- Prescriber ID reference (identifying the professional college to which the prescriber belongs, e.g., member of CPSO, RCDSO, etc.)
- Identifying number and the type of identifying number provided by the patient (e.g. valid driver’s licence, Ontario Photo Card, Ontario Health Card, etc.)
- Name of the person for whom the monitored drug is prescribed
- Date of birth and gender of the person for whom the monitored drug is prescribed
- Date on which the monitored drug is dispensed
- Drug identification number
- Quantity of the monitored drug dispensed
- Length of therapy, in number of days, of the monitored drug
- Prescription number
- Pharmacist ID (registration number from the Ontario College of Pharmacists)
- Pharmacy ID

For further information about the process for submitting information respecting the dispensing of monitored drugs to the NMS and the requirements for using the different data fields and codes, please refer to the NMS Pharmacy Reference Manual, available at:
http://health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/drugs/resources/narcotics_manual.pdf.

The NMS will have real-time Drug Utilization Review (“DUR”) capabilities. When a dispensing record is submitted by a pharmacy to the NMS, the system will conduct DUR checks. If potential issues such as double-doctoring and poly-pharmacy visits are detected, the NMS will issue an alert to the pharmacy in real-time (i.e. at the time that the prescription is being dispensed).

Although the system issues real-time alerts to the pharmacy in certain circumstances where inappropriate use may be identified, the NMS does not permit health care providers to access patient records at the point-of-care. Prescribers, dispensers/pharmacies, and other health care providers will not be able to view patient profile information (e.g. patient prescription history) on the NMS. Point-of-care access to patient information is part of the larger Medication Management System initiative currently under development through eHealth Ontario.

The ministry has developed a list of questions and answers relating to the implementation of the NMS for health care providers. For additional information about the NMS and its functionalities, please visit:
http://health.moh.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/drugs/ons/monitoring_system.aspx

For general questions relating to the Ontario Narcotics Strategy and/or the legislative requirements, please visit: http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/drugs/ons/ons_faq.aspx

Or call: ServiceOntario, Infoline at 1-866-532-3161, TTY 1-800-387-5559

In Toronto, TTY 416-327-4282

Hours of operation: 8:30am - 5:00pm

For technical issues relating to the submission of data to the NMS, please contact your pharmacy software vendor or send your question(s) to the ministry at: @MOH-G NarcoticsMonitoringSystem

To learn about Ontario’s Narcotics Strategy, the requirements under the *Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act, 2010*, or to obtain the list of monitored drugs, please visit:
<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/drugs/ons/>