

Standards of Practice



DRUGS: PRESCRIBING SCHEDULE 1 DRUGS

Prescribing Schedule 1 drugs is an **advanced restricted activity**. Dental hygienists must apply for and receive authorization from the College prior to performing this activity, as set out in the [Restricted Activities Standard of Practice](#). The dental hygienist who prescribes must also adhere to the Drugs: General Standard of Practice.

STANDARD STATEMENT

The dental hygienist who is authorized by the College to **prescribe** Schedule 1 drugs does so safely and appropriately within their scope of practice, practice setting, and competencies, and in compliance with legislation.

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The dental hygienist must...

1. Apply for and receive authorization from the College prior to prescribing a Schedule 1 drug.
2. Prescribe in accordance with current provincial and federal legislative requirements and standards.
3. Comply with the regulations and policies that enable the dental hygienist to prescribe.
4. Prescribe only those Schedule 1 drugs listed in the [Dental Hygienists Profession Regulation \[will be updated with Bill 46 amendments\]](#).
5. Only prescribe a Schedule 1 drug to:
 - a) Treat an oral condition that the dental hygienist can identify and manage;
 - b) Aid in the achievement of the client's oral health goals; and
 - c) An individual with whom the dental hygienist has a clinical therapy relationship.
6. Not prescribe for themselves.
7. Only prescribe drugs for a family member or anyone else with whom they have a close personal relationship if they have initiated and maintained a clinical therapy relationship.
8. Only prescribe for a client when they have personally performed a comprehensive health assessment and formulated a **care plan**.
9. Consider appropriate information to assess the client, their health history, history of drug therapy, current health status, and individual circumstances.
10. Use **evidence-informed** best practice guidelines and resources when prescribing Schedule 1 drugs. The dental hygienist must only prescribe drugs for an indication that is:
 - a) Approved by Health Canada;
 - b) Considered a best practice or accepted clinical practice based on peer-reviewed literature; or
 - c) Part of an approved research protocol.
11. Select drug therapy based on knowledge of pharmacotherapy and consideration of factors, including, but not limited to:
 - a) Expected action or therapeutic outcome;
 - b) Recommended dosage and dosage adjustment for specific clients;
 - c) Common or serious adverse effects;
 - d) Drug interactions;

- e) Client's health care objectives; and
 - f) Client-specific factors such as age, weight, gender, culture, medical conditions, concurrent drugs, and drug allergies.
12. Provide the client with enough information to participate in the decision-making process and provide **informed consent**. This includes discussing:
- a) Treatment options;
 - b) Rationale for the selection of a particular drug;
 - c) Implications of using drug therapy;
 - d) Risks and benefits of drug therapy;
 - e) Expected outcomes and possible risks;
 - f) Cost implications, if applicable; and
 - g) Possible consequences of not proceeding with treatment.
13. Provide the client with sufficient information to enable the client to receive the intended benefit of the drug therapy. This includes but is not limited to:
- a) Possible side effects and when to report; and
 - b) When applicable, administration instructions, possible drug or food interactions.
14. Record the prescribing decisions made in the client's record, including the following:
- a) The date the drug was prescribed;
 - b) The name, strength, dose, and dosage form of the drug prescribed;
 - c) The quantity of the drug prescribed;
 - d) The indication for the prescribing decision;
 - e) The goal of the prescribed therapy;
 - f) Instructions given to the client;
 - g) Any follow-up required; and
 - h) Identification of the dental hygienist who prescribed.
15. Take responsibility for the prescribing decision. This includes but is not limited to:
- a) Monitoring, documenting, and evaluating the client's response to the prescribed drug therapy and following up or adjusting as appropriate; and
 - b) Notifying those health professionals whose care of the client may be impacted by the prescribing decision.
16. Issue prescriptions that are accurate and complete. To be complete:
- a) Written prescriptions must include the following legal requirements:
 - i. Name and address of the client;
 - ii. Date the prescription is issued;
 - iii. Drug name;
 - iv. Drug strength, dose, and dosage form, if applicable;
 - v. Dosage, if applicable;
 - vi. Route of administration, if applicable;
 - vii. Quantity of drug to be provided;
 - viii. Directions for use;
 - ix. Number of refills authorized and interval between each refill, if applicable;
 - x. Prescriber's name and phone number; and
 - xi. Prescriber's signature.
 - b) Computer-generated prescriptions must include the handwritten signature of the prescriber or utilize an electronic signature that is hand-initialed by the prescriber.

17. Only issue prescriptions verbally when it is not possible to issue a written prescription to the client or transmit the prescription directly to a pharmacy.
18. Ensure prescriptions transmitted to a pharmacy are transmitted in a manner that ensures client confidentiality, authenticity, validity, and security of the prescription.
19. Ensure that when prescriptions are transmitted by facsimile (fax):
 - a) The prescription is sent directly from a secure fax machine to a single pharmacy acceptable to the client;
 - b) The prescriber is available and can verify the source of the faxed prescription for the pharmacist, if required;
 - c) The prescription is only sent to one licensed pharmacy;
 - d) In addition to all the legal requirements of a complete prescription, the transmission includes:
 - i. The prescriber's address, fax number, and phone number;
 - ii. The time and date of the fax transmission;
 - iii. The name and fax number of the pharmacy intended to receive the transmission;
 - iv. An indication that the prescription represents the original of the prescription drug order;
 - v. An indication that the addressee is the only intended recipient and there are no others;
 - vi. An indication that the original prescription will be invalidated and securely filed; and
 - vii. An indication that the original prescription will not be transmitted elsewhere at another time.
 - e) Pre-printed fax forms do not reference a pharmacy, pharmacist, pharmaceutical manufacturer, distributor, agent, or broker.
20. Only transmit prescriptions via an online platform if the system meets or exceeds legal requirements in Alberta for online transmission.

CLIENT EXPECTATION

The **client** can expect that the prescribing dental hygienist is knowledgeable and works with the client to ensure the prescribed drug is the safe and appropriate choice for treating an oral health condition.

GLOSSARY

ADVANCED RESTRICTED ACTIVITY

A restricted activity which requires advanced training and authorization by the CRDHA prior to performing the restricted activity.

CARE PLAN

"Statement of goals, evidence-based interventions, and appointment schedule supporting the diagnosis" (Bowen & Pieren, 2020, p. 363).

CLINICAL THERAPY RELATIONSHIP

Refers to the professional relationship in which a dental hygienist provides clinical therapy to the client in accordance with the [Clinical Therapy Standard of Practice](#).

EVIDENCE-INFORMED

A formalized process which involves identifying, searching for, and interpreting the result of the best available evidence to inform decision-making processes.

INFORMED CONSENT

Receiving the client's permission to proceed with a proposed service following a process of decision-making leading to an informed choice. Informed consent involves ongoing communication between the parties involved. In the case of a minor or others who do not have the capacity to provide informed consent, the agreement must come from a legal guardian or substitute decisionmaker legally authorised to act on behalf of a client.

PRESCRIBE

Throughout this standard, the term prescribe refers to prescribing a Schedule 1 drug included in the [Dental Hygienists Profession Regulation \[will be updated with Bill 46 amendments\]](#).