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| Information for Prescribers  |
| Medicines and Poisons Regulation Victoria  |

## Digital Images of Prescriptions

## Prescribers in Victoria can now transmit a digital image of a prescription for a Schedule 4 medicine (excluding drugs of dependence) to pharmacists. From 7 April 2020, prescriptions can be transmitted to a community pharmacy by email, SMS, facsimile or other electronic method for dispensing (Public health emergency order #4 (PHEO #4)).

## This temporary measure has been implemented to facilitate telehealth consultations and access to medicines during the coronavirus (COVID-19) response. This measure is in place until midnight 6 October 2020 unless earlier revoked.

**Prescriber issues prescription, signed by hand or with image of their digital signature**

**Prescriber prepares digital image of prescription**

**Prescriber emails or faxes digital image of prescription to patient’s pharmacy of choice**

**Pharmacist dispenses prescription and arranges supply to patient**

**Prescriber keeps hard copy of the signed original paper prescription for two years**


## What you need to know

* Digital images of prescriptions must not be issued or dispensed for Schedule 8 medicines or Schedule 4 drugs of dependence. Drugs of dependence include all opioids, benzodiazepines and anabolic steroids.
* A digital image of a prescription is issued the same way as a regular prescription. You must sign it by hand, or if that is not practical, you may include an image of your digital signature.
* The electronic transmission of the digital image of the signed prescription must be sent to the patient’s pharmacy of choice. **Do not email or SMS it to the patient.** You can fax, scan it and email it, or

photograph it and email it to a pharmacy.

* Instructions for a repeat supply can be included. Repeats must be supplied and held in the same pharmacy that received and dispensed from the digital image of the prescription. Pharmacies cannot transmit a digital image of a prescription to another pharmacy.
* The hard copy of the signed original paper prescription must be stored securely at your practice for two years. **Do not send the original paper prescription to the pharmacy or give it to the patient**.
* A record that a digital image of the original prescription was transmitted under PHEO #4 must be made.
* An email address for a community pharmacy can be found using your search engine or tools such as www.findapharmacy.com.au. It is advisable to confirm details before sending an email or fax.

## Need more information

Visit the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services website at <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/drugs-and-poisons>

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