



NYSDA provides guidance on mandatory electronic prescribing

New York State's electronic prescribing requirement is set to take effect on March 27, 2015. NYSDA is in the final stages of negotiation with a vendor that provides electronic prescribing computer software and hopes to make an announcement within the next month. This vendor has been thoroughly vetted by NYSDA's Task Force on Technology Applications, NYSDA Support Services and NYSDA leadership. As a NYSDA member, you will be entitled to a discounted rate for their software. The announcement of an endorsed vendor will be made by email and in New York State Dental Journal.

Highlights of new law:

- Electronic prescribing of all drugs will be mandatory as of March 27, 2015.
- Both controlled and non-scheduled drugs can now be prescribed electronically.
- For electronic prescribing of controlled substances (EPCS), regulations require practitioners to register their certified electronic prescribing computer application with the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement (BNE).
- For EPCS, practitioners must also meet federal security requirements.

New York's e-Prescribing Mandate

As part of New York's I-STOP legislation, electronic prescribing of both controlled and non-controlled substances becomes mandatory on March 27, 2015. The new e-prescribing requirement will result in a number of benefits for you and your patients, including more accurate, safe and secure prescriptions.

- Pharmacists should be able to more accurately dispense the drugs prescribed because they will no longer need to interpret doctors' handwriting.
- Patients will not be able to tamper with prescriptions by changing the prescribed amount or other information on the prescription.
- Theft of prescription pads will be reduced or eliminated.

The electronic prescribing software includes drop-down reference menus to assist in selecting specific drugs, identifying interactions and contraindications and determining appropriate doses. E-prescribing software also interfaces with electronic patient records, simplifying recordkeeping.

No Computer? Are there E-prescribing Exceptions?

While the e-prescribing mandate does not require that you have an electronic patient record system in place in your practice, like the current Prescription Monitoring Program requirements for controlled drugs, it does require that you have access to the Internet in order to prescribe any drug for any patient. Dentists can access the Internet using a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone to comply with these mandates.

There are only two exceptions to the e-prescribing requirements. The first is for veterinarians. The second is where the practitioner is issuing a prescription to be dispensed by a pharmacy located outside New York State. A practitioner who issues a paper prescription to be filled in another state must file information about the issuance of such prescription with the Department of Health within 48 hours of the date of issue. If you claim an exception to do a written prescription, the prescription must still be issued on an official New York State prescription form.

E-Prescribing and Software Registration Requirements

In order to prescribe controlled substances electronically, practitioners are required to register their certified electronic prescribing computer application with the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement (BNE).

To register the computer application with BNE, practitioners must complete an "EPCS Registration Form" and email it to narcotic@health.state.ny.us with "Practitioner EPCS Registration" in the subject line. This form is being distributed by the BNE and also is available on the NYSDA website, www.nysdental.org. The "Practitioner EPCS Registration" form requires the practitioner to identify the "third party audit certifying organization" and the date of the third party audit/certification. However, the prescriber is not responsible for having an audit. The software vendor is responsible for having the audit performed – not the doctor. The vendor should provide the prescriber/software purchaser with the "audit/certification." The NYSDA endorsed vendor will provide these forms for you to register.

Questions About EPCS?

Questions regarding the EPCS registration form or process may be directed to BNE by emailing narcotic@health.state.ny.us or by calling 1-866-811-7957, option 1.

Be on the alert for additional information from NYSDA as we finalize an EPCS solution for our members.