

Changes to the Regulations to the Medical Act: Certain Clinical Assistants on the Part One Register will have Prescribing Rights

The Council to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba (CPSM) recently approved changes to regulations under the *Medical Act* that will allow certain individuals listed in Part One of the Clinical Assistant Register to have prescribing rights. More specifically, Faculty of Medicine graduates in their second year of postgraduate medical education, formerly referred to as an “internship”, are listed on Part One of the Clinical Assistant Register. The graduates will have prescribing rights under conditions similar to Clinical Assistants who are currently practicing. The government has approved these regulatory changes and they **will come into effect on September 14, 2007.**

As a reminder, the requirements for a prescription from a Clinical Assistant with prescribing rights are:

INFORMATION ON THE PRESCRIPTION, DPIN DATA ENTRY AND LIMITS ON PRESCRIBING

The authority to issue a prescription is outlined in section 12 of the Clinical Assistant Regulation. Clinical Assistants **cannot prescribe narcotics, controlled substances or targeted substances without the actual co-signature of the Supervising Physician.** The **Federal Controlled Drug & Substances Act** restricts this authority to prescribe these products to physicians, dentists, and veterinary practitioners.

The prescriptions from Clinical Assistants, with the exception of inpatients of a hospital, must include all the usual prescribing information plus the:

- name and signature of the Clinical Assistant
- contact telephone number or pager number for the CA,
- name of the Supervising Physician,
- **treatment goal and/or diagnosis and/or clinical indication.**

Prescriptions are entered into the Drug Programs Information Network (DPIN) using the name and authority of the Supervising Physician, as indicated on the prescription form.

A Clinical Assistant cannot issue a prescription for a more than a three month quantity of medication and cannot renew a prescription unless he or she has assessed the patient to determine whether a renewal is appropriate.

SCOPE OF PRACTICE

The Clinical Assistant's (CA) scope of practice must mirror that of the supervising physician. The CA effectively extends the same services to clients as does the physician.

CLINICAL ASSISTANT & PHARMACIST COLLABORATION

As with anyone employed in a healthcare field, collaboration and cooperation between all healthcare professionals is essential. The clinical assistant prescriber-pharmacist collaboration is crucial to ensure that both patient safety and quality outcomes in disease management / prevention are met. The inclusion of **“the treatment goal and/or diagnosis and/or clinical indication”** on the prescription is critical for patient care and safety and successful implementation of treatment plans.