

Controlled drugs - important changes to regulations

Healthcare Providers & Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

- The Government intends to amend NHS contract regulations to **require all healthcare providers holding stocks of CDs to comply with an agreed SOP.**
- The content of SOPs will, at a minimum, include arrangements for checks on stocks / reconciliation against the running balance in the CD register; arrangements for the safe custody of CDs and access by practice / provider staff; and rules for transport of CDs by healthcare professionals.
- SOPs for NHS primary care providers will be agreed by the relevant Accountable Officer in the PCT in which the provider is located, and for private providers by the Healthcare Commission or CSCI as part of their registration process. The DH will work with the Healthcare Commission and other key stakeholders to develop model SOPs for use both in the NHS and the private sector.

Note: The Home Office is consulting on these changes and regulatory change will be subject to the outcome of the consultation and Parliamentary approval.

New Controlled Drugs Regulations & Salaried GP Prescribing Numbers:

- New controlled drugs regulations will come into effect this summer and **unless** a doctor has a unique prescribing number he or she will be **unable** to prescribe controlled drugs. There will also be a six digit identifier that must be used for any private script for controlled drugs.
- PCOs can apply to the NHS Information centre (GMS team) for a unique number for each of the salaried GPs on their Performers List. **Salaried GPs should contact their PCOs to obtain their number.** The BMA is actively trying to ensure that locum doctors will also be allocated a unique identifying number in the future.
- There will in addition be a standardised private prescription form for Schedule 2 and 3 drugs. Records of private prescriptions will be held on a central database so that they can be monitored by PCTs.
- Pharmacists will not be permitted to dispense a script for controlled drugs without a unique identifying number.

[Joint briefing from the LMC and Hampshire & IoW LPC on safer management of Controlled Drugs.](#)