

AIT Top Tips - Controlled Drugs

A Controlled Drug (CD) is a Prescription Only Medicine (POM) with extra laws and regulations to appropriately restrict access to it, raise awareness of the abuse potential/adverse effects and so to reduce the harm associated with misuse or inappropriate prescribing.

Misuse of Drugs Act 1971; describes the Class of a CD (A, B or C) depending on its harmfulness when misused; offences for unlawful manufacture, possession and supply are graded accordingly.

Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001; describes the Schedule of a CD (1-5) depending on the production, possession, supply, prescribing and record keeping allowed or required.

Schedule 1 drugs are deemed to have no therapeutic/medicinal use and their possession or supply is prohibited without a Home Office licence.

	Examples of drug	Special Prescription requirements	Record keeping required	Safe custody required
Schedule 2	Diamorphine, morphine, fentanyl, oxycodone	Yes	Yes	Yes
Schedule 3	Buprenorphine, temazepam	Yes	No but good practice	Yes
Schedule 3	Tramadol, midazolam, phenobarbital	Yes	No but good practice	No
Schedule 4	Chlordiazepoxide, diazepam, lorazepam, nitrazepam, Z-drugs	No	No	No
Schedule 5	Oral dihydrocodeine, oral codeine, Oramorph	No	No	No

Special prescription requirements;

Must be indelible; dated; signed by prescriber; name and address of prescriber; name and address of patient; name, form and strength of drug; total quantity to be supplied in words and figures.

Prescriptions for Schedule 2, 3 & 4 CDs are valid for 28 days and usually limited to 30 days supply.

Receipt;

ID should be shown when signing for receipt of CDs.

Any discrepancies between what has been ordered and what is received; enter in CD register what has actually been supplied and contact the supplier/pharmacy.

Record keeping;

Controlled Drugs Register; one page for each patient, each form and each strength of each drug.

All entries (receipt/administration/return) to be witnessed, with running totals to reduce errors.

Discrepancies; check for numerical errors, if found correct in margin/footnote, sign, date & witness.

If not found, follow Care Home policy at once; inform management, local CD accountable officer/police.

Completed books should be kept for at least 2 years after the date of the last entry.

Safe custody;

CD cupboards should be kept secure at all times and are to be used only to store CDs.

It is good practice to keep CD cupboard keys separate from other keys and the responsible person to sign for them at each shift change.

Self-administration of CDs;

Follow Care Home policy to ensure a robust risk assessment of resident with regular reviews.

Requires a lockable, non-portable cabinet/drawer in resident's room, with staff access.

If staff order/return CDs on resident's behalf, record receipt/supply/returns/disposal in CD register.

CDs stored in CH for administration by visiting Healthcare professionals (HCP) should be entered in CD register on receipt. Administration should be signed for by HCP and witnessed by CH staff.

Returns;

Care Home without nursing:

return to supplying pharmacy. Record drug/form/quantity & obtain pharmacist signature on return; if pharmacy staff collect, they sign CD register at time of collection.

Care Home with nursing:

arrange for collection of waste medicines with a licensed disposal company. CDs should be appropriately denatured before collection and a record of the waste transfer note made.