

## Drugs of Dependency

This policy relates to the prescribing of Schedule 8 (S8) and Schedule 4 (S4) medicines at Haynes Medical Centre and other locations serviced by this business. Schedule 8 medications are defined by the Poisons Act 1964 as:

“Substances which should be available for use but require restriction of manufacture, supply, distribution, possession and use to reduce abuse, misuse and physical or psychological dependence”.

It is the policy of this surgery to not supply drugs of addiction to any patient requesting scripts unless medical evidence can be supplied to substantiate the need for these drugs.

It is up to the discretion of each doctor to make an informed decision on each patient's needs. Our GP's are respectful, non-judgemental, and have clear responses to inappropriate requests for drugs of independence.

The General Practitioners (GPs) at our practice believe that to provide quality care for their patients, all prescriptions require an appointment with a doctor. **The prescribing of S8 and S4 medications will NOT be done on the first visit with a new GP**, unless the patient can provide evidence of undergoing palliative treatment or if they meet the following criteria;

1. The patient can produce a documentation from their treating Specialist (NOT a GP), dated less than 3 months prior to their consult, confirming the reason for treatment, drug, dose, frequency and duration of treatment.
2. The GP is able to contact this Specialist and confirm that the details of this documentation are true and correct.
3. The patient is not registered with the Dr Shopper Hotline and is not currently participating in a Community Program for Opioid Pharmacotherapy.

The prescribing GP can cease or decline prescribing an S8 medication to a patient for the following reasons;

- If the patient demonstrates any form of abusive or intimidating behaviour
- The GP determines that ongoing treatment with an S8 medication is no longer beneficial to the patient
- The patient is not planning to be a long-term patient at the practice
- For any other reason determined to be suitable by GP
- In certain circumstances, GPs may only prescribe a limited amount of medication to be dispensed at a time. This is done in the best interest of patient safety and to encourage appropriate use of medication.

Certain Schedule 8 medications cannot be prescribed by a GP and a prescription will need to be provided by a Specialist. If this occurs, the GPs at Haynes Medical Centre can assist with a referral to the required Specialist.

Patients may need to acknowledge that their care requirements may be complex, and that referral for ongoing care for all or part of your healthcare may be required. It is our practice policy that patient care is matched with the level of complexity.

The RACGP's prescribing drugs of dependence in general practice, Part A Clinical governance framework is a starting place for our general practice to support solutions to problematic prescription drug use.

Our practitioners are advised to refrain from prescribing medications for family members. Drugs of dependence must not be prescribed to family members except in an emergency. Signage is displayed in waiting room and on the window informing patients of this policy.

The GPs at Haynes Medical Centre reserve the right to apply this policy to certain Schedule 4 medications such as temazepam and diazepam, or to any other medication they deem suitable.

Our GP's have the right to discontinue care of a patient who has behaved in a violent or threatening manner. Patients are reminded that we have a zero tolerance on issues relating to staff abuse. Any threats to staff will result in transfer of your care.