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| Drugs and Poisons Fact Sheet |
| First Aid Sector |
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# Background

With the introduction of the Non-Emergency Patient Transport and First Aid Services (First Aid Services) Regulations 2021, there is a requirement for all first aid providers to be aware of the requirements of purchasing and possessing medicines with relevant amendments made to the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substance Regulations 2017 in December 2021.

# Key Statement

A licence holder must only possess Schedule 4 medicines for which the licence holder has Clinical Practice Protocols (Clinical Practice Guidelines -CPGs) which have been submitted to and approved by the Department of Health (the department).

## Un-scheduled, Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 Medicines

* No Health Services Permit will be required under the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981* to purchase and possess Schedule 2 or 3 medicines for the provision of Basic, Intermediate or Advanced first aid services*.*
* The amendment to the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017 will authorise all licenced first aid providers to purchase wholesale and possess Schedule 2 and 3 medicines where the first aid provider holds CPG’s approved by the department.
* These medicines may be administered under the approved CPG by appropriately trained staff without an order or prescription from a prescriber.

## Schedule 4 Medicines (Intermediate Licence Holders)

* No Health Services Permit will be required under the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981* to purchase and possess certain Schedule 4 medicines for the provision of Intermediate First Aid services.
* A **Secretary Approval** issued under the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017 will authorise the purchase and possession of a **limited number of Schedule 4** medicines where a licenced first aid provider holds CPG’s approved by the department.
* These medicines may be administered under the approved CPG by appropriately trained staff without an order or prescription from a prescriber.

## Schedule 4 Medicines (Advanced Licence Holders)

* No Health Services Permit will be required under the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981* to purchase and possess certain Schedule 4 medicines for the provision of Advanced First Aid services.
* A **Secretary Approval** issued under the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017 will automatically authorise purchase and possession of a more comprehensive range of Schedule 4 medicines where a licenced first aid provider holds CPGs approved by the department.
* These medicines may be administered under the approved CPG by appropriately trained staff without an order or prescription from a prescriber.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

## I am a basic/intermediate/advanced provider. What medicines can I purchase/possess/use?

#### Schedule 2 and 3 Medicines (Basic/Intermediate/Advanced):

No Restrictions

#### Schedule 4 Medicines (Intermediate/Advanced):

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| Adrenaline  | Nitrous Oxide  |
| Ipratropium  | Ondansetron  |
| Methoxyflurane  | Salbutamol  |

#### Schedule 4 Medicines (Advanced):

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| Adenosine  | Haloperidol  |
| Amiodarone  | Hyoscine butylbromide  |
| Analgesic agents  | Insulin  |
| Antiarrhythmic agents  | Ipratropium  |
| Antibiotic agents  | Local anaesthetics  |
| Anticoagulant agents  | Metoprolol  |
| Anticonvulsant agents  | Muscle relaxants  |
| Antihypertensive agents  | Noradrenaline  |
| Antihypotensive agents  | Olanzapine  |
| Antiemetic agents  | Oxytocin  |
| Antihistamines  | Potassium chloride  |
| Anti-inflammatory agents  | Prostaglandins  |
| Antiplatelet agents  | Rocuronium  |
| Antipyretic agents  | Salbutamol  |
| Antipsychotic agents  | Short acting anaesthetic induction agents  |
| Atropine  | Suxamethonium  |
| Benzatropine mesylate  | Tenecteplase  |
| Corticosteroids  | Tetanus antitoxin  |
| Diuretic agents  | Tranexamic acid  |
| Fibrinolytic agents  | Vecuronium  |
| Glyceryl trinitrate  | Verapamil  |

#### Schedule 4 Medicines – Drugs of Dependence (Advanced)

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| Diazepam  | Midazolam  |

## How are providers monitored for safe drug storage and administration?

The department monitors the storage of medicines under the *Drugs, Poisons & Controlled Substances Act 1981* and the Drugs, Poisons & Controlled Substances Regulations 2017.

Authorised Officers attached to the Non-Emergency Patient Transport and First Aid Regulatory team monitor the administration of medicines and may refer potential medicine storage breaches to the department’s Medicines and Poisons branch.

## Can I bring medicines from another state into Victoria?

If a provider brings scheduled medications from another state into Victoria, the organisation is required to be a licenced first aid provider in Victoria and must comply with the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981* and associated Regulations.

## Do we need a Clinical Practice Guideline for each medicine in use?

Yes. Each medicine must be matched to a specific patient condition/s and have been approved by the department’s NEPT and First Aid Clinical Practice Protocol Assessment Committee (CPPAC).

## Do we have to accept all the medicines on the Secretary’s approval list?

No. A first aid provider may select the medicines from the Secretary’s approved list which are suitable for their event and licence level.

## We would like to have access to additional medicines not on the Secretary’s approval list. Can we do this? and how?

An authorised prescriber (medical practitioner or registered nurse practitioner) may practice in accordance with their prescribing skill set.

If a prescriber is going to administer a medicine not contained in the Secretarial Approval list, it must be in accordance with a CPG defined by the organisation.

## Can my licenced organisation buy medicines from a wholesaler under this mechanism?

Yes. The Secretary Approval for each licence level authorises a first aid provider to purchase listed medicines from pharmaceutical wholesalers, appropriate to the level of licence held.

# Key requirements under Victorian Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances legislation

While it will not be necessary for holders of first aid licences to also hold permits under the Victorian Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances (DPCS) Act 1981 in order to obtain and use relevant Schedule 2, 3 and 4 medicines, these providers of first aid services must still comply with all relevant requirements of DPCS legislation.

## Access to medicines

Only clinical first aid staff members may access the scheduled medicine storage facilities and/or carry out administration of relevant Schedule 2, 3 and 4 medicines (i.e., in compliance with legislative requirements, including CPG’s approved by the department)

Other non-authorised staff members (e.g. administrative staff members, cleaners, maintenance people or the general public) must not have access to the scheduled medicines storage facility.

## Medicine storage facility

The facility used for the storage of scheduled medicines must be:

* Lockable
* Not able to be moved easily from the premises (e.g., affixed to the premises) in order to prevent theft (or unauthorised access)

The storage facility must not be opened for any reasons other than to access the medicines contained inside it. **No items other than medicines should be stored inside the facility.**

## Medicines outside the storage facility

No medicines should be left unattended when not in a storage facility.

When scheduled medicines are taken to be used away from storage premises, the medicines must be under the constant supervision of an authorised staff member while away, and any unused medicines at the end of the day will either be destroyed compliantly or returned to a storage facility at the storage premises.

## Administration records

Administration records of scheduled medicines must include:

* The name and location of the patient being administered
* The date of administration
* The name, form and strength of the medicine being administered
* The quantity being administered

## Destroying medicines

Unwanted scheduled medicines should be destroyed appropriately. There are no further specific requirements for the destruction of Schedule 2, 3 or 4 medicines in DPCS legislation:

* If the medicines are destroyed on the organisation’s premises, clinical staff members should render the items non-recoverable and non-identifiable.
* Small quantities of unwanted stock may be provided to a community pharmacy for destruction (if they are willing to accept the stock).
* Larger quantities may be returned to the original pharmaceutical wholesaler, or to an organisation that holds a poisons permit to receive such material for destruction.

## Reporting lost medicines

If any scheduled medicines are lost/stolen, then this should be reported to the department. It is important that the loss of any drugs of dependence are reported (e.g., diazepam and midazolam). Reports may be made via the form “Make a notification of lost scheduled substance” available at <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/drugs-and-poisons/online-forms-drugs-and-poisons-regulation>

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