



## **Destruction of Narcotics, Controlled Drugs and other Targeted Substances**

Pharmacists may now proceed with destruction of narcotics and/or controlled substances without requesting and receiving authorization from Health Canada. This comes after communication from Health Canada stating that as of June 30, 2016, they no longer require pre-authorization requests for the local destruction of unserviceable narcotics and controlled drugs. This policy applies to retail pharmacies, pharmacists and those working within a hospital.

To review the policy released by Health Canada in its entirety, please review the following attachments – Health Canada’s signed letter **Appendix A** and the Section 56 Class Exemption **Appendix B**.

Two options are available for destruction of narcotics, controlled substances and other targeted substances: local (on site) destruction by pharmacists or persons in charge of hospitals, or under the exemption where pharmacists or persons in charge of a hospital may sell or provide narcotics and controlled drugs to a licensed dealer for destruction. There are a few requirements to consider before proceeding with destruction through one of the options available below.

Please note that the same process should be undertaken for prescriptions of narcotics, controlled drugs or other targeted substances that have been returned to the pharmacy for proper disposal. The return should be documented appropriately, and the destruction should be witnessed by two health care professionals or the drug should be returned to a licensed dealer who is licensed to destroy the drug. Refer to the options below for more detail. Although this does not appear to be covered in the Health Canada policy, it is SSCP policy as a good practice to adopt as accountability from the patient might become an issue.

In the case where an estate administrator becomes the legal guardian of a controlled substance and returns the substance to the pharmacy for disposal, a complete detailed record of the drug to be destroyed should be prepared, signed and dated by the witnesses confirming the destruction. Destruction should take place in the presence of the estate administrator and a pharmacist acting as the two health care professionals using option one, “local (on site) destruction” below. Health Canada’s Estate Destruction form may be used for documentation purposes. Please see **Appendix C** attached.

### **OPTION 1: Local (on site) destruction**

1. Requirements for the record of destruction should include:
  - a. Destruction date;
  - b. Name, strength and quantity of narcotic, controlled drug or targeted substance to be destroyed; and
  - c. Name, signature and date the health care professionals witnessed destruction
2. Destruction should be witnessed by two health care professionals\*.

- a. For narcotic and controlled drugs, this includes: licensed pharmacists, persons in charge of a hospital, practitioners, nurses, pharmacy interns and licensed pharmacy technicians or an inspector from the SCPP
  - b. For targeted substances, this only includes: licensed pharmacists, practitioners and persons in charge of a hospital
3. The **record must be kept for at least two years**.
4. The narcotic, controlled drug or targeted substance should be altered or denatured to such an extent that its composition has been rendered impossible or improbable.
5. The method used to destroy narcotics, controlled drugs or targeted substances must conform with all environmental legislation.
  - a. The use of chlorine bleach is not advised as it can cause exothermic reactions. Kitty litter and liquid soap is a safe alternative.

\* The difference between the types of health care professionals that can witness the destruction of narcotics/controlled drugs versus targeted substances has been confirmed by Health Canada and is bound by the Benzodiazepine and other Targeted Substances Regulations, section 2.

#### **OPTION 2a: Return to a licensed dealer who is licensed to destroy narcotics and/or controlled substances**

1. A licensed pharmacist must receive a written, signed order from a dealer licensed by Health Canada specifying:
  - a. the name, quantity and strength of the narcotic or controlled drug; and
  - b. that the drug is being provided for the sole purpose of destruction
2. Once the order is received, the licensed pharmacist may sell or provide narcotics or controlled drugs to be destroyed to the licensed dealer who is licensed to destroy these substances
  - a. to request a list of licensed dealers please contact [compliance-conformite@hc-sc.gc.ca](mailto:compliance-conformite@hc-sc.gc.ca)
3. The licensed pharmacist must also keep a record of:
  - a. the name, quantity and strength of the narcotic or controlled drug;
  - b. the name of the licensed pharmacist that requested destruction;
  - c. the name and address of licensed dealer;
  - d. the date of transaction; and
  - e. a means of identifying the written order
4. The licensed pharmacist must cause a record to be kept of the provision or sale for **at least two years** in a separate narcotic and controlled drugs file by date and number in a readily retrievable format

**OPTION 2b: Return to a licensed dealer who is licensed to destroy targeted substances**

1. A licensed pharmacist must receive a written, signed order from a dealer licensed by Health Canada specifying the:
  - a. brand name, quantity and strength of the targeted substance;
  - b. date of transaction; and
  - c. name and address of the licensed dealer
2. Once the order is received, the licensed pharmacist may sell or provide targeted substances to be destroyed to the licensed dealer who is licensed to destroy these substances
  - a. to request a list of licensed dealers please contact [compliance-conformite@hc-sc.gc.ca](mailto:compliance-conformite@hc-sc.gc.ca)
3. The licensed pharmacist must cause a record to be kept, of the written order for **at least two years**.



Dear Sir/Madam:

Thank you for your request for approval of the destruction of narcotics and/or controlled drugs. Effective immediately, Health Canada no longer requires pre-authorization requests for the local destruction of unserviceable narcotics and controlled drugs. This means that pharmacists may proceed with destruction without notifying and receiving acknowledgment from Health Canada in advance.

Local (on site) destruction is one option available to pharmacists and persons in charge of hospitals when destroying unserviceable narcotics and/or controlled drugs.

It is important to note that any record or written order required to be retained under the regulations made under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA)* or any relevant CDSA exemption must be retained in a manner that permits an audit to be made pursuant to sections 41 and 64 of the *Narcotic Control Regulations* and sections G.03.011 and G.05.002 of Part G of the *Food and Drug Regulations*). With respect to appropriate record keeping and destruction, Health Canada recommends the following:

1. Before any destruction, the pharmacist should record information with respect to the destruction, such as the destruction date, name, strength per unit and quantity of the controlled substance to be destroyed. This information should be kept for a period of two years.

Beyond the two-year period, it is up to the hospital administrators, pharmacists or practitioners to determine if these records should be kept for a longer period based on other regulatory requirements such as provincial or professional practice regulations.

2. The pharmacist should destroy the drugs in the presence of another health professional. Both witnesses should record their names and destruction date on a statement indicating they witnessed the destruction.

For these purposes, a health professional could be a pharmacist, practitioner, nurse, pharmacy intern, regulated pharmacy technicians (in those provinces where they are registered with the pharmacy licensing authority) or an inspector from the provincial pharmacy licensing authority.

3. The controlled substance should be destroyed using a method of destruction that conforms with applicable federal, provincial and municipal environmental legislation.

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4. The controlled substance should be altered or denatured to such an extent that its consumption has been rendered impossible or improbable.

For the regulatory requirements for the destruction of benzodiazepines and other targeted substances, please refer to sections 2, 55 and subsection 65(1) of the *Benzodiazepines and Other Targeted Substances Regulations*.

Pharmacists and persons in charge of hospitals who do not wish to destroy narcotics or controlled drugs on site may, through an exemption under section 56 of the *Controlled Substances and Drugs Act*, sell or provide these substances, to a licensed dealer who is licensed to destroy narcotics or controlled drugs. More information on this exemption and its conditions is attached for your reference.

Should you request the list of authorized licensed dealers or have any questions on the matter, please do not hesitate to contact us at the following e-mail address: [compliance-conformite@hc-sc.gc.ca](mailto:compliance-conformite@hc-sc.gc.ca)

Thank you,



Julie Thompson  
Director  
Office of Controlled Substances  
Health Canada



**SECTION 56 CLASS EXEMPTION FOR PHARMACISTS AND PERSONS IN CHARGE OF A HOSPITAL FOR THE SALE OR PROVISION OF NARCOTICS AND CONTROLLED DRUGS TO LICENSED DEALERS FOR DESTRUCTION**

Pursuant to section 56 of the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (CDSA) and subject to the terms and conditions herein, pharmacists and persons in charge of a hospital are hereby exempted in the public interest from the application of the following provisions of the *Narcotic Control Regulations* (NCR) and Part G of the *Food and Drug Regulations* (FDR-Part G) when selling or providing narcotics and controlled drugs to a licensed dealer who is licensed to destroy narcotics and controlled drugs:

Pharmacists

- a. Subsections 5(1) and 5(2) of the CDSA.
- b. Subsection 31(1) of the NCR.
- c. Section G.03.002 of the FDR-Part G.

Persons in Charge of a Hospital

- a. Subsections 5(1) and 5(2) of the CDSA.
- b. Subsection 65(1) of the NCR.
- c. Subsection G.05.003(1) of the FDR-Part G.

This exemption gives authority to a pharmacist to sell or provide narcotics or controlled drugs, and to a person in charge of a hospital to permit narcotics and controlled drugs to be sold or provided, to a licensed dealer who is licensed to destroy narcotics or controlled drugs. This exemption is applicable only if the following conditions are met:

1. The sale or provision of narcotics and controlled drugs pursuant to this exemption must occur for the sole purpose of destruction.
2. Narcotics and controlled drugs sold or provided pursuant to this exemption may only be sold or provided to a licensed dealer who is licensed to destroy narcotics or controlled drugs.
3. Sale or provision pursuant to this exemption may only occur pursuant to a written signed order from the licensed dealer to whom the narcotic or controlled drug will be sold or provided for destruction. The written order must specify the name, quantity and strength per unit of the narcotic or controlled drug and must indicate that the sole purpose of the order is destruction.
4. A pharmacist must keep a record, and a person in charge of a hospital must keep a record or cause a record to be kept, of the name, quantity and strength per unit of a narcotic or controlled drug sold or provided under this exemption, the name of the pharmacist that requested the destruction as well as the name and address of the licensed dealer to whom it was sold or provided, a means of identifying the written order and the date on which it was sold or provided.
5. Any record or written order required under this exemption is a record required to be retained for a period of two years, in a manner that permits an audit to be made pursuant to sections 41 and 64 of the NCR, and sections G.03.011 and G.05.002 of the FDR-Part G.

This exemption will remain in effect until revoked.

*Original signed by Johanne Beaulieu*

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Director, Office of Controlled Substances, CSTD/HECSB for and on behalf of the Minister of Health

Effective date: Sept 18, 2013

**141** Health and Welfare Canada Santé et Bien-être social Canada  
 Health Protection Branch Direction générale de la protection de la santé  
**Destruction form- Formule de destruction-**  
**Estate Succession**

Name (Estate) - Nom (Succession)	
Address - Adresse	Date

To whom it may concern  
 À qui de droit

The following Psychoactive substance material having become unserviceable, was  
 Les substances psychotropes qui suivent étant devenues inutilisables ont été

destroyed at the request of - détruites à la demande de  _____ Name of Executor or Administrator Nom de l'exécuteur ou de l'administrateur	and in the presence of - et en présence de  _____ Name of health professional Nom du professionnel de la santé
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Qty - Quantité	Items - Articles	Qty - Quantité	Items - Articles

**WARNING**  
 Psychoactive substances should be destroyed on the premises and health professionals are advised to ensure that the destruction method to be employed complies with provincial and municipal laws and provincial pharmacy guidelines pertaining to the destruction of drugs and chemicals

**AVERTISSEMENT**  
 Les substances psychotropes seront détruites sur place et les professionnels de la santé s'assureront que la méthode de destruction utilisée est conforme aux lois provinciales et municipales et aux normes provinciales de pharmacie traitant de la destruction des drogues et des produits chimiques.

Signature of estate administrator - Signature de l'administrateur judiciaire	Signature of health professional - Signature du professionnel de la santé
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Distribution - Diffusion  
 A copy is to be retained by the Estate Administrator and the Health Professional  
 L'administrateur judiciaire et le professionnel de la santé doivent en conserver une copie.

