

Legal aspects of dispensing and prescription retention procedures according to the laws of Malta

Valerie Vella

B.Pharm (Hons), MSc(Aberdeen), RPharmS

Email: valvel77@gmail.com

The aim of this brief overview is to highlight the situation regarding retention of dispensed prescriptions according to Maltese law.

Single use /fully dispensed prescriptions

According to the Laws of Malta^{1,2} a fully dispensed prescription should be signed by the pharmacist (including registration number) and dated. This documentation needs to be retained, for a period of no less than three months from the date of dispensing, in a manner where easy retrieval is possible. The law also specifies that disposal of such prescriptions after the three months have elapsed should be done in a way that patient's confidentiality is protected.^{1,2}

Repeat/Partially filled prescriptions

With regards to repeat or partially filled prescriptions the law³ states that the managing pharmacist is duty bound to keep written or electronic records of medicinals sold against such prescriptions. The dispensing pharmacist is obliged to endorse the prescription with the pharmacy stamp and with the word "dispensed", together with the

date on which it was dispensed, the amount given, the signature and the registration number.³

Prescription for controlled drugs

The subsidiary legislation 101.02 which deals with internal control of dangerous drugs clearly states that on dispensing a controlled prescription, Part C needs to be filled accordingly and retained by the pharmacist. The managing pharmacist is then obliged, on the first day of the month, to send all the prescriptions for controlled drugs dispensed the previous month to the Superintendent of Public Health. Details of controlled prescriptions need to be recorded into the respective register and this register must be retained for a period of not less than two years from the date of the last entry in the register.^{4,5}

In 2014 a communication was issued by the Malta Chamber of Pharmacists (Malta Chamber of Pharmacists 2014, letter, 21 April) advising pharmacists to retain prescriptions and records for a minimum of five years in view of professional indemnity policy requirements.

References

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