



Communiqué

23 May 2016

The Victorian Pharmacy Authority (the "Authority") met on 10 May 2016 at the Authority offices.

This communiqué contains a reminder to pharmacists and pharmacy owners about ensuring appropriate dispensary access and utilisation.

The Authority held no Panel Hearings in April.

Dispensary access and activities

During monthly meetings, the Authority considers reports of pharmacy inspections which include matters that may constitute evidence of breaches of legislation and/or non-compliance with guidelines. From time to time the Authority invites pharmacy owners to attend meetings of the Authority to discuss such deficiencies.

The Authority is concerned that non-dispensary staff members are frequently observed carrying out activities in the dispensary contrary to Victorian Pharmacy Authority Guidelines. Dispensary access should be restricted to dispensary staff only. The Guidelines state that the dispensary is a private area dedicated to the dispensing of medicines and the secure storage of patients' records. All other activities are to be carried out away from the dispensary. This includes non-dispensary clerical work such as point of sale data entry, preparation of promotional materials, storage of retail stock, and storage of personal belongings and tea/meal breaks for non-dispensary staff.

The Authority also reminds pharmacists that under the *Pharmacy Regulation Act 2010* there can be no access to the dispensary of a pharmacy except under the direct supervision of a registered pharmacist. Licensees should ensure that a pharmacist is supervising the dispensary at all times, and that dispensary access is restricted to trained dispensary staff only. Inspectors have observed security and occupational health and safety risks when untrained staff, couriers or members of the public have access to the dispensary.

Pharmacy registration and licence renewals

Invoices were sent out electronically in the first week of May for annual renewals of:

- a) Pharmacy and Pharmacy department premises registration, and
- b) Licences to carry on a pharmacy business or pharmacy department.

In previous years, registration renewals were sent to email addresses provided for pharmacy premises, and licence renewals to the email addresses of individual owners. This year all licence and registration renewals were sent via email to registered premises only, not to individual owners. Pharmacy owners and pharmacists in charge will need to ensure appropriate distribution of renewal notices to ensure payment.

Please ensure that you have received your invoices and notified the VPA of the current email address for any registered premises.

Registration and licence renewals must be received with payment by 30 June 2016. There is no provision in the Pharmacy Regulation Act 2010 for late payments. If a licence or registration

lapses there may be serious professional and/or legal obligations for licensees and pharmacists practising in unregistered premises.

Payment options will again include BPAY, secure online payment via VPA website, cheque, credit card or EFT.

Toni Riley
Chair