



Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

Destruction of controlled drugs

Stock expired controlled drugs

Pharmacists, and other healthcare professionals who maintain a stock of controlled drugs, are not allowed to destroy any expired Schedule 1 or 2 CDs from their stock without the destruction being witnessed by an authorised person. For more information on who is authorised to witness the destruction of Controlled Drugs please refer to <http://www.rpsgb.org/pdfs/cdsafedestructionguid.pdf>

When a date-expired stock CD is being destroyed, details of the drug must be entered into the CD register, including the drug name, form, strength and quantity, as well as the date of destruction and the signature of the authorised person in whose presence the drug was destroyed.

Any date-expired CD stock should be stored securely in the CD receptacle, clearly labelled as out of date stock and segregated from current CD stock to avoid potential dispensing errors or re-use.

Patient returned controlled drugs

These are CDs that have been prescribed for, and dispensed to, a named patient and then returned unused or part-used. Any CDs that have been returned to the pharmacy from patients must not be reused and must be destroyed.

Currently the destruction of patient-returned CDs does not have to be carried out in the presence of an authorised witness, nor does it have to be recorded. However, it is now recommended good practice to make a record of any patient returned CDs that are returned to the pharmacy and to have their destruction witnessed by another member of staff and signed against. The Controlled Drugs (Supervision of Management and Use) Regulations 2006 require Standard Operating Procedures to be in place for maintaining a record of the CDs specified in Schedule 2 that have been returned by patients. These Regulations came into force on 1st January 2007 in England and 1st March 2007 in Scotland. Arrangements for Wales have yet to be finalised.

Patient-returned CDs should be destroyed as soon as possible. If a pharmacist is unable to destroy patient-returned CDs on receipt, the CD must be clearly labelled as a 'patient-returned CD for destruction' and stored securely in compliance with safe custody regulations but segregated from normal CD stock to avoid potential dispensing errors or re-use.

Patient-returned CDs must not be entered into the CD register but should be recorded in a separate book or sheets designed for that purpose – see overleaf.

NB: Pharmacists in England and Wales cannot currently accept any waste medicines, including CDs, from care homes previously registered as nursing homes. These care homes must make their own arrangements for disposing of waste medicines correctly.

For the most up to date resource tool please refer to the RPSGB website: <http://www.rpsgb.org/protectingthepublic/inspectorate/>
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For all your legal and ethical inquiries please contact the RPSGB advisory service on 020 7572 2308

Methods of destruction of controlled drugs

All Schedule 1, 2, 3 and 4(part1) CDs should be destroyed in order to render the active ingredient irretrievable. Controlled drugs returned by patients from their own homes and residential homes, can be sorted, popped from blister packaging and denatured in the pharmacy. Ideally, controlled drug denaturing kits should be used, but where alternative methods are adopted, these should safeguard the environment and the health of workers and other members of the public. The kits can be obtained from the NPA and some waste contractors may have stocks. Fentanyl patches should have the backing removed and the patch should be folded over on itself and then placed in the waste disposal bin. Ampoules should be opened, the liquid poured into a CD resin kit and the ampoule itself placed in a sharps bin.

Further guidance on the safe destruction of CDs can be found at: <http://www.rpsgb.org/pdfs/cdsafedestructionguid.pdf>

Additional resources

The NPA CD record book for patient-returned CDs available from NPA Sales

The record sheet below has been produced by the RPSGB to help support clinical governance in pharmacy. It should be used for any patient returned CDs and should be available for inspection. In respect of the particular issue of patient returned CDs we would like to draw your attention to the following points:

- Controlled Drugs returned by patients may currently lawfully be destroyed without the presence of an authorised person.
- They should be denatured and disposed of with other pharmaceutical waste (using a resin kit), according to local agreements with waste disposers.
- It is good practice to keep an itemised list of returned CDs, which you dispose of and this form is provided for that purpose.
- It is also good practice to ensure that a member of your staff witnesses the destruction being undertaken
- In the future it seems likely that it will become a requirement to record 'patient-returned' controlled drugs
- An SOP must be in place for maintaining a record of the CDs in Schedule 2 that have been returned by patients

Date Rec'd	Rec'd by (name & sig)	Patient's name (if known)	Patient's address (if known)	Name of CD	Form & strength of CD	Qty of CD	Role of person returning CDs if known	Date destroyed	By pharmacist (name & sig)	Witnessed by (name & sig)
10/09/05	Mr Pharmacist <i>A. Pharmacist</i>	Mrs Jones	64 Willow Close, Old Town, Surrey	MST	60mg tablets	40 tablets	Nurse – Mrs Nurse	10/09/05	Mr Pharmacist <i>A. Pharmacist</i>	Ms Technician <i>S. Technician</i>

Ideally the first 8 columns should be completed on receipt of the CD, the last 3 columns being completed once the CD has been destroyed.

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Destruction of 'patient-returned' controlled drugs

Date Rec'd	Rec'd by (name & sig)	Patient's name (if known)	Patient's address (if known)	Name of CD	Form & strength of CD	Qty of CD	Role of person returning CDs if known	Date destroyed	By pharmacist (name & sig)	Witnessed by (name & sig)

This table can be photocopied. Completed sheets should be filed and kept for a minimum of 7 years. They should be made available for inspection purposes.

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