Keep your patients on the safe side of prescription medicines with SafeScript.

An important message to doctors, nurse practitioners and pharmacists from the Victorian Government.
Introducing SafeScript, a new system to help you make safer decisions about whether to prescribe or dispense a high-risk medicine.

What is SafeScript?
SafeScript is computer software that will help you provide safer care to patients taking certain high-risk prescription medicines. It provides you with comprehensive information on the prescription history of a patient. This includes clinical alerts to help you identify earlier when a patient may be at risk of harm and require further support.

Why is SafeScript being implemented?
The significant and increasing harms from high-risk prescription medicines are a serious public health concern. In recent years, more Victorians have died from overdoses involving pharmaceutical medicines than from illicit drugs or the road toll.

This is your opportunity to do something that will make a difference and potentially save lives.

Which medicines are monitored through SafeScript?
Prescription medicines that are causing the greatest harm to the Victorian community are monitored through SafeScript.

These include all Schedule 8 medicines, such as:
- oxycodone (e.g. OxyContin, Endone)
- morphine (e.g. Kapanol, MS Contin)
- alprazolam (e.g. Kalma)
- methylphenidate (e.g. Ritalin)

and some Schedule 4 medicines including:
- all benzodiazepines (e.g. Valium, Rivotril)
- zolpidem and zopiclone (e.g. Stilnox, Imovane)
- quetiapine (e.g. Seroquel)
- products containing codeine (e.g. Nurofen Plus, Mersyndol and Panadeine Forte)

In recent years, more Victorians have died from overdoses involving prescription medicines than from illicit drugs or lives lost on our roads.

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“With SafeScript, I’ve got more control over my prescribing. You don’t have to just rely on what the patient tells you.” – General Practitioner

“Now, health professionals can access real-time information about a patient’s prescription history – and discuss with them the risks of using dangerous amounts of prescription medication.” – Pharmacist
How can I use SafeScript in my daily practice to help my patients?

To enable safer care, Victorian legislation allows you to check the SafeScript record for a patient in your care without requiring the patient’s express consent.

SafeScript is a useful clinical tool that enables you to provide co-ordinated care, minimise the risk of harm from high-risk medicines and help identify patients who may need additional support to manage their medicines. The system is easy to use, safe and secure.

Many clinicians have found that using SafeScript has helped open discussions with their patients on the risks of certain prescription medicines and providing counselling opportunities on the safer use of these medicines.

Does SafeScript decide whether I can prescribe or dispense a medicine?

No, you are still responsible for your own clinical decisions and you will not be prevented from prescribing or dispensing a medicine you consider to be clinically necessary. SafeScript will provide you with more information to help you identify high-risk circumstances but will not make a decision for you.

Should you decide that a medicine is no longer the safest treatment, you are reminded that good clinical practice involves ensuring that appropriate continuity of care is provided for your patient. Abruptly discharging the patient from your care or abruptly stopping treatment in patients who have been taking high-risk medicines over a long period of time may be contrary to patient safety. There may be implications to discontinuing some medicines too quickly. For example, sudden withdrawal of benzodiazepines may result in rebound insomnia or anxiety, or at worst, seizures.

Is SafeScript use mandatory?

Yes, SafeScript use is mandatory from April 2020. It will be mandatory for you to check SafeScript when writing or dispensing a monitored medicine. There will be some exceptions such as when you are treating a hospital patient, an aged care resident, or a patient receiving palliative care.

I am a prescriber who prefers to handwrite prescriptions. Can I access SafeScript?

Yes, you can always access SafeScript through a secure web portal on any computer, tablet or mobile device at www.safescript.vic.gov.au regardless of whether you issue computer-generated prescriptions or handwritten prescriptions.

What do I need to do to get started?

- Complete SafeScript training
  
  Training is available to support you in using SafeScript and responding to the needs of patients. All online modules attract CPD points. The training covers safe supply of high-risk medicines, using respectful communication with patients when discussing medicine use, and how to use the SafeScript system.
  
  Register for training at www.vtphna.org.au/safescript-training-hub

- Register for SafeScript
  
  If you have not already registered, a SafeScript email will be sent to your AHPRA email address in early 2020 which contains a link to complete your registration. For security reasons, only you can register yourself for SafeScript. Registration is a simple, automated and quick process.

- Set up SafeScript on your computer for a better user experience
  
  SafeScript will always be available to all registered clinicians through a secure web portal at www.safescript.vic.gov.au
  
  An additional feature of SafeScript is the pop-up notifications you can receive on your computer to help quickly identify when you need to view information in SafeScript. To enable this feature, most practices and pharmacies will only need to download the latest version of their clinical software. Some may need to download an app on their computer. You may require your practice manager or pharmacist-in-charge to install this on your computer.

  Instructions on how to set up SafeScript based on your prescribing or dispensing software can be found at www.health.vic.gov.au/safescript and click “Setting up and Accessing SafeScript”.

- From April 2020, you must check SafeScript when prescribing or dispensing a monitored medicine

“Very impressed with the accuracy and currency of data available.”
– General Practitioner
The GP Clinical Advisory Service (GPCAS) is a peer-to-peer service helping Victorian GPs support patients with high-risk prescription medication concerns and complex needs.

GP Clinical Advisors, who have received comprehensive training in pain management, addiction and mental health, will be available across Victoria to provide mentoring and advice from April 2019.

Phone: 1800 812 804 (via DACAS Victoria) and ask to be referred to your local GP Clinical Advisor.

For more information go to www.dacas.org.au or email gpclinicaladvisors@turningpoint.org.au

Where can I receive more information about SafeScript?

Technical support
IT:safescript@dhhs.vic.gov.au  Phone: 1800 723 379

All other enquiries
safescript@dhhs.vic.gov.au  Phone: 9096 5633

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