

POISONS CONTROL INFORMATION SHEET

No. 318

SUPPLYING SCHEDULED SUBSTANCES TO OCEAN GOING VESSELS

The purpose of a medical kit on board a boat/ship is to have medication available to treat **unexpected** medical problems. Individuals requiring treatment for ongoing medical conditions should make private arrangements with their medical practitioner to ensure they have adequate supplies of their medication for the duration of the voyage.

Medical Kits on Ships

Section 28 of the *Poisons and Dangerous Drugs Act* allows a pharmacist to supply a scheduled substance to the master of a ship where the master is required or permitted under Navigation (Orders) of the Commonwealth to be in possession of and/or use that substance.

Entitlements

A ship surveyor representing the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) may request that a pharmacist check the medical supplies on a commercial vessel. The quantities are limited to the maximum stated in the relevant "scale" of the AMSA Marine Orders.

Commonwealth registered Vessels Obtaining Supplies

The master of the ship must provide a written and signed medicines order to the pharmacy, and provide the pharmacist with a copy of the ship's imprest list and/or certification stating the scale of the vessel. This written order should be kept by the pharmacy for a period of 2 years. Some companies act as agents for the ships, and the agent must provide this written order from the master of the ship.

The pharmacy should have a copy of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority Marine Orders on hand to check what is allowable in each scale of vessel. (Marine Orders Part 10 Issue 3 available from Ausinfo 13 24 47 at a cost of \$7.00).

NT registered Vessels Obtaining Supplies

Vessels which only travel on intrastate voyages (eg Darwin to Gove) come under the NT Marine Act. These are surveyed annually by the NT Marine Branch, who certify the vessel and assign it a scale according to the Uniform Shipping Laws (USL) Code. A written and signed order should be provided to the pharmacist by the master of the ship, along with certification stating the scale of the vessel.

Information about medicinals in the USL Code scales can be obtained by ringing one of the surveyors at NT Marine Branch on 8999 5239.

International Vessels

Occasionally an international vessel (eg a cruise ship, private vessel) may request medical supplies from a pharmacy. A written order should be provided by the master of the ship on a letterhead. A copy of the ship's imprest list should also be provided to the pharmacist.

Medical Kits on Yachts

Under Section 42 of the *Poisons and Dangerous Drugs Act*, the Chief Poisons Inspector may issue an authorisation to an individual to possess and use scheduled substances in a medical kit on board a yacht, while travelling out of Australia, or taking part in an ocean-going race, e.g. the Darwin-Bali yacht race.

Entitlements

Authorised persons are entitled to hold the drugs (scheduled substances) specified in the authorisation, or in the schedule (list) to the authorisation. The quantities are limited to the maximum stated in the authorisation.

The specified drugs are generally those listed in the Australian Yachting Federation recommended first aid kit, category 1 (copy available from Poisons Control if needed).

Obtaining Supplies

The authorised person must provide the pharmacist with a written and signed order, and must present his/her authorisation. A copy of the imprest list should also be provided. The pharmacist should retain and record the written order (in the same way that a prescription is processed), but return the authorisation to the person after sighting. The authorisation is valid for further supplies of scheduled substances during the life of the authorisation.

Schedule 8 Drugs

S8 drugs are to be supplied **on a single occasion only**. The supplying pharmacist is required to endorse the authorisation with the details of supply.

If further supplies of S8 drugs are required within the life of the authorisation, either because the drugs have expired or been used, the authorised person must apply to the Chief Poisons Inspector for a new authorisation. He/she will be required to present evidence of use or proof that the S8 drugs have expired before a new authorisation is issued.

Medical Kits on Other Vessels eg prawn trawlers**Entitlements**

A person on the boat needs to be authorised to possess and use the scheduled substances (as for a yacht medical kit). The Department of Health and Families have a recommended imprest list for fishing vessels which is available from Poisons Control. S8 drugs are not usually provided for fishing boats.

Obtaining Supplies

As for yacht medical kit supplies. The authorised person should provide the pharmacist with a copy of their imprest list to establish their entitlements.

The entire imprest list generally does not appear on the authorisation. Only S8 drugs and "problem" S4 drugs will be listed. If required, a copy of the approved imprest list is available from Poisons Control.

For further details please contact:

Poison Control

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