

NEW SECTION

WAC 246-869-010 Pharmacies' responsibilities. (1)

Pharmacies have a duty to deliver lawfully prescribed drugs or devices to patients and to distribute drugs and devices approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for restricted distribution by pharmacies, or provide a therapeutically equivalent drug or device in a timely manner consistent with reasonable expectations for filling the prescription, except for the following or substantially similar circumstances:

(a) Prescriptions containing an obvious or known error, inadequacies in the instructions, known contraindications, or incompatible prescriptions, or prescriptions requiring action in accordance with WAC 246-875-040.

(b) National or state emergencies or guidelines affecting availability, usage or supplies of drugs or devices;

(c) Lack of specialized equipment or expertise needed to safely produce, store, or dispense drugs or devices, such as certain drug compounding or storage for nuclear medicine;

(d) Potentially fraudulent prescriptions; or

(e) Unavailability of drug or device despite good faith compliance with WAC 246-869-150.

(2) Nothing in this section requires pharmacies to deliver a drug or device without payment of their usual and customary or contracted charge.

(3) If despite good faith compliance with WAC 246-869-150, the lawfully prescribed drug or device is not in stock, or the prescription cannot be filled pursuant to subsection (1)(a) of this section, the pharmacy shall provide the patient or agent a timely alternative for appropriate therapy which, consistent with customary pharmacy practice, may include obtaining the drug or device. These alternatives include but are not limited to:

(a) Contact the prescriber to address concerns such as those identified in subsection (1)(a) of this section or to obtain authorization to provide a "therapeutically equivalent" product;

(b) If requested by the patient or their agent, return unfilled lawful prescriptions to the patient or agent; or

(c) If requested by the patient or their agent, communicate or transmit, as permitted by law, the original prescription information to a pharmacy of the patient's choice that will fill the prescription in a timely manner.

(4) Engaging in or permitting any of the following shall constitute grounds for discipline or other enforcement actions:

- (a) Destroy unfilled lawful prescription.
- (b) Refuse to return unfilled lawful prescriptions.
- (c) Violate a patient's privacy.
- (d) Discriminate against patients or their agent in a manner prohibited by state or federal laws.
- (e) Intimidate or harass a patient.