

Electronic prescribing (e-prescribing) occurs when a prescriber uses a computer or handheld device with software that enables a provider to:

- ✓ Electronically route the prescription to the patient's choice of pharmacy
- ✓ Electronically access a patient's prescription benefit
- ✓ Electronically access a patient's medication history

Some of the features of e-prescribing require additional software from the electronic health record (EHR) or e-prescribing vendor. Check with your vendor to find out what is required to implement the various e-prescribing functionality listed above.

Why E-Prescribe?

E-prescribing is a recognized and proven effective tool to improve members' health outcomes and reduce costs.

Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) implemented an initiative with its health plans to increase e-prescribing. The goal is for prescribers to use e-prescribing for at least 70 percent of all original prescriptions.

Advantages of E-Prescribing

- Creates one workflow for all electronic prescriptions – controlled and non-controlled substances
- Reduces fraud and abuse by preventing forgeries and stolen prescription pads
- Eliminates phone calls and inaccuracy due to illegible hand-written prescriptions
- Decreases adverse drug interactions and events (e.g., allergic reactions)
- Condenses record keeping for patients' prescription history
- Decreases therapeutic duplication
- Increases patient adherence

Available Resources

Additional information and e-prescribing resources are available at azhec.org/information-center/e-prescribing/.

Email info@azhec.org or call us at (602) 688-7200 for assistance.



FAQs about E-Prescribing

Q: Is e-prescribing of controlled substances legal?

A: Yes. In 2010 the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) issued regulations permitting pharmacies to receive, dispense and archive electronic prescriptions. Then in April 2012, Arizona's governor signed into law legislation making e-prescribing of controlled substances (EPCS) legal in Arizona.

Q: How do I get started e-prescribing controlled substances (EPCS)?

A: You will need specialized software and a two-factor authentication device. Providers should follow these steps to get started:

1. Contact your EHR vendor and ask if they are certified to do EPCS
2. Complete identity proofing requirements
3. Obtain dual (two-factor) authentication device or process
4. Set up security access controls
5. Adhere to digital signature and audit requirements

Q: Isn't e-prescribing more likely to encourage hacking and HIPAA violations?

A: Absolutely not. Electronic prescriptions are much more secure than written prescriptions, which can be tampered with, lost or stolen.

Q: Can all pharmacies accept electronic prescriptions?

A: There aren't any known barriers to pharmacies accepting electronic prescriptions. Virtually all chain and independent pharmacies in Arizona are set up to receive electronic prescriptions.

Q: My colleagues say that e-prescribing is confusing and stressful. Is this true?

A: It may seem this way at first. However, once you begin using it, you'll find that it'll save time and has the potential to decrease errors.

Q: What's the typical timeframe to become registered to e-prescribe?

A: The process can take longer than 30 days so it's in your practice's best interest to contact your EHR vendor as soon as possible to begin the process.

Q: Are there resources to assist me in getting started with e-prescribing or EPCS?

A: Yes, Arizona Health-e Connection (AzHeC) can help by answering questions and assisting you overcome any barriers you may encounter. Email info@azhec.org or call us at (602) 688-7200. Additional resources are also available at azhec.org/information-center/e-prescribing/.