

RI Board of Medical Licensure and Discipline
Position statement
Electronic Prescribing

It is the position of the RI Board of Medical Licensure and Discipline that electronic prescribing can promote the overall quality, safety, and efficiency of patient care. Thus, the Board supports adoption of electronic prescribing by practitioners for whom prescribing is within their scope of practice.

Electronic prescribing (e-prescribing), as referred to in this statement, describes the electronic entry of a prescription by a practitioner, the secure electronic transmission of the prescription to a pharmacy, and the receipt of an electronic message (not a fax) by the pharmacy. It also describes practitioners' ability to approve electronically prescription renewal requests sent electronically by the pharmacy to the practitioner. Under current federal and state law, all legend drugs (except controlled substances) can be prescribed electronically.

About 90% of retail pharmacies in Rhode Island are currently capable of accepting electronic prescriptions via networks that provide the systems for routing prescriptions from the practitioner to retail pharmacies. In order to e-prescribe, practitioners need to adopt either an Electronic Health Record with e-prescribing capability, a stand-alone product that is used primarily for e-prescribing, or another product used for practice management or other office functions that has e-prescribing capability.

The Board recognizes that practitioners have many options as to the product they use to transmit prescriptions electronically. However, the Board notes that in order to achieve the potential of electronic prescribing to deliver higher quality, improved safety, and greater efficiency of care, practitioners should adopt products with certain recommended features, including but not limited to:

- Ability to send prescriptions electronically to pharmacies.
- Identifying information about the patient on the screen at all times
- Ability to make patient medication history available
- Decision support tools
 - Automatic safety alerts (such as when drug is contraindicated based on the patient's allergies, current medication, medical conditions, and/or laboratory result.)
 - Assistance with dosing calculations

Other features that are desirable include:

- Ability to make historical patient health information available
- Patient educational materials about prescriptions, including how to take prescribed medications and why they should be taken.

More information about electronic prescribing is available from the following sources:

References

- 1 Bates DW et. al. Effect of computerized physician order entry and a team intervention on prevention of serious medication errors. JAMA 1998 Oct 21; 280(15):1311-6.
- 2 Teich JM et. al. Effects of computerized physician order entry on prescribing practices. Arch Intern Med. 2000 Oct 9;160(18):2741-7.
- 3 Center for Information Technology Leadership. The value of computerized provider order entry in ambulatory settings. 2003
- 4 Institute of Medicine, Committee on Quality in Healthcare in America. To err is human: building a safer health system, Washington, DC, National Academy Press; 1999.
- 5 Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. MEPS Highlights #11: Distribution of health care expenses, 1999.
- 6 Institute of Medicine, Board on Health Care Services. Preventing Medication Errors: Quality Chasm Series. Press Release, July 20, 2006.

