

How to use this book

Community pharmacy

This book covers the pharmacy units for Community Pharmacy Certificates I & II. Unlike the skills NOW retail unit books, which have separate volumes for notes and skills, these pharmacy units are in one combined volume.

It is in three parts:

1. Notes on each unit – read the notes
2. Practical learning activities to be completed in a pharmacy – do these
3. Task records for each unit to facilitate your assessment - complete

The learning activities are designed to be completed by trainees working in the industry – for some, tasks such as delivering prescription drugs this is essential. In other cases, instead of using pharmacy information, the trainee can learn by observation eg one learning activity task is to identify the best sellers in each category – in a pharmacy this can be done by using store figures, but in the absence of these, this can be done by observation eg. as these are non classified items you can visit other pharmacies or outlets such as Priceline or Big W and determine the best sellers from the space allocated to each product.

Learning activity format

Skills NOW uses a comprehensive 14 point activity plan for each of the 'Identify, locate and sell' Community Pharmacy units. The emphasis is on product knowledge and the CARE service protocol. These are:

1. Read the notes on this unit

Trainee reads the notes for each unit.

2. Briefing on this unit by pharmacist

Pharmacist or deputy provides an overview of the category and identifies key issues.

3. Category/product locations

Trainee checks location and size to be familiar with category and its relative importance

4. S2 and S3 products

Trainee identifies S2 & S3 products for this category and their location. Why are the products S2 and S3?

5. Private brand products

Trainee identifies any private brand products in this category which can be used to promote the outlet.

6a Rank the top 6 products in this category by unit sales

Trainee identifies the best selling (most popular) items in the category – excellent product knowledge required.

6b Rank the top 6 products in this category by value - \$

This exercise shows the trainee the products which make the largest sales and profit contributions excellent product knowledge required.

7. Why do you think that these products are popular?

Helps the trainee to evaluate products – reasons could include ailment incidence, brand, pack size, price.

8. Which are the most common ailments in this category?

The table matches the ailment with the remedy – trainee links both.

9. Read about the ailments, symptoms and medications

Trainee to read pharmacy leaflets, references, product labels and asking questions to improve product knowledge.

10. Case study

Trainee has customer health problem – which questions to ask to help determine needs?

11. Which product(s) would you recommend to relieve the ailment?

Trainee to suggest most suitable products.

12. If price was a customer issue, which product would you recommend?

Trainee to suggest most suitable for price conscious shopper.

13. When would you refer a customer to the pharmacist in this category?

Trainee to list the circumstances for this category.

14. Which complementary products may be helpful in preventing or treating this ailment?

Trainee to know complementary products for user benefit and additional sales.

skills NOW Learning Activity Summary

The last page of each skills NOW Skills Book is a skills NOW Learning Activity Summary (LAS) which lists all the activities which the trainee has completed for the batches/levels. This list is to be certified by the trainer/assessor.

LAS is to be used by the trainee when applying for a position to support a resume. This significantly strengthens the job application by providing evidence of completed practical activities. eg.

“Not only have I gained the qualification, but I have completed practical tasks in these areas!”

1. Accept prescriptions and deliver medicine

SIRPDIS001A

This chapter covers **SIRPDIS001A Accept prescriptions and deliver medicine** which is a core unit for Community Pharmacy Certificates I and II.

When you have completed this you should have the skills and knowledge to enable you to accept prescriptions from the customer, confirm the prescription information and accurately communicate this to a pharmacist. You should then be able to deliver the dispensed medicines to the customer.

Application and objectives

Prescription medicines play a key role in determining pharmacy success. Staff should be skilled in this area, not just to maintain service standards but also for staffing flexibility to cover roster and leave arrangements. The staff member acts as an intermediary between customers and the pharmacist and plays an important role in ensuring that government regulations are complied with.

Employability skills

Most pharmacists would expect that regular staff would be able to carry out this function.

About prescription medicines

It is perfectly understandable for new pharmacy staff to be confused about the many medicinal products which they sell, if only because of the long, often confusing and scientific names used coupled with a perhaps limited medical knowledge. For such reasons, the pharmacist plays a key leadership role in each community pharmacy.

To make it simpler, medicines may have several different names:

1. The drug title – named after the active ingredient(s) eg. paracetamol
2. The brand eg. Panadol. This will be in common everyday use and will be often used by doctors when writing prescriptions. The product may be available in several strengths such as from child to Panadol Forte and may be in several different formats such as tablets, capsules, powders or mixtures.
3. Generics – Brands are registered for several years, but when registration expires, the product becomes available for other manufactures. Generic 'Paracetamol' or Amcal 'Paracetamol' may be available at much lower cost. To contain expenditure on health, the government encourages the use of cheaper generics where possible provided there are no adverse effects.

Key medicinal issues

If you think of medicinal products in ***Ailment – Relief*** terms then you can approach each in a consistent way:

- What is the product for? Identify its use such as relief of headache, muscular cramp etc..
- How does it work? Reduces temperature, relieves sore throat etc..
- How do you use it eg. pill, mixture, rub. Dosage and frequency.
- When not to use it eg. when using heavy equipment.
- Side effects - user allergies may mean that some drugs are not suitable – in some cases the side effects may be worse than the ailment

- Drug interactions – the drug may interact with other medications which the patient is already taking.
- There may be specific issues for the old, young; pregnant women and people with special needs?

The prescription process

These are the steps taken in fulfilling a customer order for prescription medicines:

Step	Pharmacy performance standard
1. Customer enters pharmacy	Uncluttered store entry point
2. Customer moves to dispensary area	Good signage to identify dispensary
3. Customer presents prescription to pharmacy assistant	Friendly greeting, helpful approach
4. Pharmacy assistant checks prescription details	Check details as per Table 1.01.01
5. Pharmacy assistant discusses any issues with the customer	Discuss any prescription or customer issues
6. Pharmacy assistant arranges collection time with customer	Arrange time – waiting facilities are needed
7. If all in order, prescription passed to pharmacist for preparation	Any queries to be raised with pharmacies
8. Pharmacist checks for any problems and completes prescription	Check other medications for drug interactions
9. Pharmacist alerts staff member of any issues and if patient advice is required	Advise if need to see patient
10. Finished prescription stored with others awaiting collection	Alphabetical storage – easy to find
11. Customer or agent collects and signs for prescription	Check patient name, items against prescription – customer or agent to sign for receipt. Thank customer and direct to service counter.
12. Customer takes prescription to service counter and completes transaction	Friendly, efficient service.

Confirm prescription and customer details

In former times medical people performed the dual roles of physician and pharmacist. As they made their own medicines there was no need for prescriptions, but of course medicine recipe records would need to be maintained to ensure preparation consistency and quality.

The first ‘prescriptions’ were actually letters from the doctor to a pharmacist such as:

“From Dr Finchaven G.P. to Tom Reynolds Druggist

Please supply Harry Jones with one bottle of your cough syrup,

Dr. Phineas Finchaven”.

Written in a doctor’s notoriously illegible handwriting, this still provided a useful record for both physician and pharmacist.

Today, prescriptions are much more complex due to:

- Medical advances – far more medicines are available
- Targeted treatments – far more specific medicines rather than just general remedies
- Government regulation – the industry is far more tightly regulated – registration of health practitioners and medicines

Delivering medicines

Your initial role is to make the customer feel welcome. Some customers may be concerned or even embarrassed about their personal health issues. You need to be considerate and treat their health issues in confidence.

ideas
NOW

BE TACTFUL!

Listen carefully to customers to better understand their health issues and needs but stay within your depth – more technical health matters should be referred to the pharmacist or a more experienced staff member.

When receiving the prescription you need to confirm the prescription validity and the customer and prescription details. Table 1.01.01 is a copy of a renewal prescription which shows the information which you need to check.

The four boxes on the upper right of the form described as ‘transaction type’ are to be marked ‘**X**’ according to type:

Gen – General – a normal transaction processed at full price.

Con – Concession – for pensioners or Health Card holders

Ent - Entitlement – for special entitlements such as safety net benefits for heavy medicine users

RPBS – Repatriation – for special beneficiaries

TABLE: 1.01.01 PRESCRIPTION CHECK

Pharmaceutical benefits – ~~PBS~~/RPBS
Repeat authorisation
 Valid only if the patient/pharmacist or duplicate prescription is attached

Serial no. C	Prescriber no. 2145787	Gen	
Patient's Medicare no. 3014- 24589-44	Exp 7/2011	Con	X
Patient's PATIENT ID ROBIN JONES 12 Jackson Street South End 2097		Ent	TRANSACTION TYPE
		RPBS	
Authority number	Entitlement number		
Original prescription transcription (item, strength, quantity, directions) RAMIPRIL CAPSULES 10 mg (RAMIPRIL SANDOZ) Qty 30		PRESCRIBED DRUG	
Take ONE capsule daily			
1 Rpt left	Dr. R. Smith	Rpt No	20325F
Original prescription details	Times dispensed	Priced items	
Date		\$	
PBS approval number			
No. repeats authorised			
Name & PBS approval number of pharmacist dispensing this supply	Name & PBS approval number of pharmacist issuing this authorisation		
Prescription number this supply PRESCRIPTION ID	PHARMACIST ID		
I certify that I have received the medication and the information relating to any entitlement to free or concessional pharmaceutical benefits is not false or misleading.			
...../..... Date of supply Patient's or agent's signature		
..... Agent's address			

Your need to check that the prescription details are correct and properly documented so that the pharmacist can accurately and efficiently fulfil the prescription. If there are any problems discuss with the customer.

Out of date prescriptions are a common problem as these automatically become invalid – new scripts are needed.

Most pharmacies maintain files for their regular prescription customers. This makes it easier to prepare prescriptions but also has health benefits eg. the pharmacist knows the customer medication regimen and can work with the doctor to minimise product duplication and adverse drug interactions.

You may wish to identify new customers and refer them to the pharmacist who will be interested in their current medication.

Confirm customer's prescription needs

Older people use more prescription medicines than the younger population. You will often encounter older ladies who have five or six prescriptions in their handbags. You may need firstly to help them sort through them (check expiry dates at the same time) to identify the needed products.

Brand substitution

Doctors will normally prescribe products by brands but when their patent expires, other, cheaper brands become available. For example 'Tritace' is a commonly used to treat high blood pressure but Ramipril is a cheaper alternative. Pharmacies are encouraged to ask customers if they would be prepared to try the cheaper product. – if "Yes", then this may be recorded on the customer file and the prescription amended.

The initiating drug company will always argue that their product is best – they invented it and have been improving it ever since. This may or not be correct. If the customer uses the cheaper item without problems then they may change to the new product, but if not, they can revert to the prescribed brand.

Pharmaceutical issues

There may be instances where the prescribed drug is unsuitable eg. the customer says "I have not used this before – what is in it – I have an allergic reaction to morphine based drugs!" This should be referred to the pharmacist who should check and if necessary discuss with the physician – a substitute drug may be required.

Prescription discrepancies

Medical, distributor and pharmacy software should have comprehensive information on all approved medicinal products so that there should be relatively few errors with computer generated prescriptions but there can be errors, particularly if hand written. These could include:

- Misspelling of drug names
- Confusion of similar drugs eg. amoxicillin and ampicillin
- Pack size discrepancies eg. prescription for 10 units, pack size 12 units.

Other discrepancies can include:

- Incomplete or incorrect prescriber or customer details
- Out of date prescriptions or those marked as 'cancelled'
- Suspicious prescriptions – forged, altered or for excessive quantities

Issues such as these should be referred to the pharmacist.

Another issue can be out of stocks eg. prescription for 100 units but only 60 available. The pharmacy would normally part fill the order so that the patient would have enough drugs for immediate needs eg supply 40. Normally the transaction for 100 would be processed and the pharmacy would “owe” the customer the remaining 60 to be picked up (no further charge) when available – usually within one or two days.

Prescription delivery times

Provided that the product is in stock and not made to order, and there are sufficient staff for processing, then most prescriptions can be quickly filled. Where possible this should be according to customer need.

Normally, a pharmacy will have four types of customer:

- Some will want it immediately – in this case give an estimated time – say 10 or 15 minutes. The customer will either wait (provide seating) or do something else and return.
- Some will lodge the prescription as part of a shopping trip eg. “I am going shopping – will be back in about an hour.”
- Some will drop off the prescription, but it is not urgent – “will pick it up in two or three days.”
- Some will have the prescriptions delivered for reasons such as disability

In all cases, the prescriptions should be filled by the agreed time – don’t make promises which cannot be kept. Many prescriptions will be urgent as customers may have left it too late to go to the pharmacies.

ideas
NOW

SCHEDULE PRESCRIPTIONS !

To deliver prescriptions on time, they need to be prioritised. Many pharmacies plan to complete all prescriptions by the close of business each day to avoid a carrying work over.

Delivering medicines to customers

The normal process is that the customer will come to the counter and will say – ‘To pick up a prescription for Susie Robertson.’

The process is:

- Locate the prescription – this will usually be in alphabetical order in separate trays for each customer. This contains the prescriptions, any repeat prescriptions and the products. In most cases the products will carry a price ticket for sales processing.
- Confirm that the prescription has been checked by the pharmacist – does the pharmacist need to see the customer to provide further or confidential advice?
- Check that the prescription is for the right person – Susie Robertson.
- Check the products against the prescription – are these the right products? – the right quantities?
- is the order complete?
- Check the products with the customer and answer any queries or refer to the pharmacist.

- Obtain signature of patient or their agent to acknowledge receipt of the products. Pharmacy copy to be filed according to dispensary procedures – if there are any doubts about the bona fides of the agent refer to the pharmacist.
- Check that any repeat prescriptions are provided.
- Customer takes the prescription tray to the service counter and completes the transaction.

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your counter neat and tidy • Welcome customers warmly • Respect privacy & confidentiality • Process prescriptions accurately • Refer any issues to the pharmacist or an experienced staff member • Check prescriptions carefully prior to delivery • Ensure that all regulations and pharmacy procedures are complied with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceed your authority – refer issues to others such as the pharmacist • Take short cuts – be thorough • Let customers down – deliver prescriptions when promised

Accept prescriptions & deliver medicine

SIRPDIS001A

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Read the notes on this unit

2. Briefing on this unit by pharmacist

Key service issues for this category are:

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Prescription forms and pharmacy procedures

Study the prescription forms used and understand dispensary procedures. If uncertain ask the pharmacist for advice.

4. Checking incoming prescriptions

Check for:

Item	Check
Prescriber details	
Expiry date	
Prescribed medication	
Customer details	

5. When do you refer to the pharmacist?

6. Checking outgoing prescriptions

Check for:

Item	Check
Customer details	
Pharmacist prescription check	
Product check – products	
Product check – quantities	
Product check – pricing PBS or concessions	
Customer or agent signature	

Identify, locate and sell analgesic products

SIRPPKS003A

Analgesic products

What are they?

These are products which provide general pain relief for everyday health problems such as head aches and other pains. They also serve as anti - pyretics – drugs which reduce inflammation and lower temperatures. These products are commonly part of a home or office medicine chest so that purchase may not be directly related to a specific health issue – it could be re-stocking.

Three active ingredients are commonly used in analgesics

Ingredient	Popular brands	Comment
Aspirin	Aspro, Bex, Disprin and others	One of the first popular analgesics – reliable with no side effects. Useful for patients with circulatory problems.
Paracetamol	Panadol and others	The most popular analgesic – acts quickly to relieve mild pain and lower fevers. Free of side effects and interactions with other drugs it can be safely used by people of all ages.
Ibuprofen	Nurafen and others	This also has minimal side effects – particularly useful for relief of joint and muscular pain.

These drugs are also combined with others such as codeine for greater pain relief or with anti – histamines or decongestants to provide relief for allergy complaints and cold and flu symptoms.

The drugs are scheduled from unclassified to S2 to S4 depending upon type and potency. In most pharmacies, the analgesics will all be displayed together.

What are the common ailments and symptoms?

These are suitable for most aches and pains, the most common being headaches. Patients will usually have their own preferred remedy.

Which products are available?

Capsules, tablets, caplets, liquid filled soft capsules and gel caps

Soluble powders

Gels, creams and ointments

.Transdermal patches and rectal medication

Identifying patient needs

Purchasers will usually buy the same product which they used last time but they may have special needs such as for a child (Panadol child version available) or if they think that they need something stronger. In this case refer to the pharmacist as an S3 drug may be required. Check that the patient is not allergic to the proposed remedy.

Providing information for patient

Discuss dosage instructions with the customer. Caution against any overdose – give drug time to work.

6a Rank the top 6 products in this category by unit sales

Define a period – say six months. Use computer sales data

Rank	Product	Units
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

6b Rank the top 6 products in this category by value - \$

Rank	Product	\$
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

7. Why do you think that these products are popular?

8. Which are the most common ailments in this category? List ailments and match products to them.

Ailment	Product

9. Read about the ailments, symptoms and medications

Read pharmacy leaflets, references and product labels to improve your product knowledge. If you require further information consult your supervisor or the pharmacist.

10. Case study – store visitor asks ‘I have a terrible headache - do you have something to help?’ What questions would you ask to help determine their needs?

11. Which product(s) would you recommend to relieve the ailment?

12. If price was a customer issue, which product would you recommend?

13. When would you refer a customer to the pharmacist in this category?

14. Which complementary products may be helpful in preventing or providing relief for this ailment?

Identify, locate & sell baby & infant products

SIRPPKS004A

TRAINEE

ASSESSOR

DATE

Mark your completed activities – mark ✓

Activity	✓
1. Read the notes on this unit	
2. Briefing by pharmacist	
3. Category/product locations	
4. S2 and S3 products	
5. Private brand products	
6. Best selling products	
7. Why are products popular?	
8. Ailments and products	
9. Product knowledge	
10. Case study – seeking information	
11. Recommend products?	
12. Price & value	
13. When to refer to pharmacist	
14. Complementary products	

Employer/Third party statement

I certify that the trainee has satisfactorily completed the activities as listed and has applied these practical skills in the workplace. I have observed that the trainee consistently performs these to meet the standards required.

Signed : Date:

Name & position:

Trainee :

LEARNING ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Certificate I & II Community Pharmacy – Pharmacy units

TRAINEE	
ASSESSOR	
DATE	

SIR07 Number	Unit title
SIRPDIS001A	Accept prescriptions & deliver medicine
SIRPPKS001A	Support sale of pharmacy medicines
SIRPPKS002A	Identify, locate & sell allergy relief products
SIRPPKS003A	Identify, locate & sell analgesics
SIRPPKS005A	Identify, locate & sell cough & cold products
SIRPPKS006A	Identify, locate & sell eye, ear & oral products
SIRPPKS007A	Identify, locate & sell gastro intestinal condition products
SIRPPKS008A	Identify, locate & sell first aid & wound care products
SIRPPKS009A	Identify, locate & sell skin & fungal products
SIRPPKS004A	Identify, locate & sell baby & infant products

Employer/Third party statement

I certify that the nominated trainee has satisfactorily completed the skill development tasks in the listed areas and has applied these practical skills in the workplace. I have observed that the trainee consistently performs these to meet the standards required.

Signed : Date:

Name & position:

Trainee :