PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE POLICY

Destruction of Unusable and Expired Controlled Drugs and Substances

Introduction

Pharmacists are responsible for the safety and security of all drugs in their possession. Drugs included in the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA drugs) that are stored in the pharmacy while awaiting destruction (e.g., those removed from inventory as expired, damaged or otherwise unserviceable, and those returned by patients) are inherently challenging to reconcile and, as such, are particularly vulnerable to internal diversion. In response to this risk, the Office of Controlled Substances (OCS) revised its requirements for destruction so that pharmacies no longer need to obtain prior approval, allowing pharmacies to dispose of the drugs promptly and securely.

Policy

1. All CDSA drugs awaiting destruction will be stored in a manner that restricts unauthorized access and that enables ready identification of tampering and/or diversion.
2. Pharmacies will destroy CDSA drugs at the earliest opportunity.
3. Pharmacies will destroy all drugs in a manner required by law, and consistent with recognized best practices to minimize negative environmental impact.

References

Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and its subordinate regulations, Government of Canada
Guidance document for pharmacists and dealers licensed to destroy narcotics, controlled drugs or targeted substances: Handling and destruction of post-consumer returns
Guidance Document for Pharmacists, Practitioners and Persons in Charge of Hospitals: Handling and Destruction of Unserviceable Stock
NSCP Policy: Disposal of Confidential Patient Information
NSCP Standards of Practice: General