COPP 6.4 Officers Issuing Medication

Prison

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| **Principles**As referenced in the [Guiding Principles for Corrections in Australia, 2018](http://justus/intranet/prison-operations/Documents/guidelines-for-corrections-in-aus.pdf):4.1.4 Prisoners are provided a standard of health care equal to services available in the community that meet their individual physical health, mental health and social care needs fostering continuity of care between custody and the community |

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# Scope

This Commissioner’s Operating Policy and Procedure (COPP) applies to all prisons administered by or on behalf of the Department of Justice (the Department).

# Policy

No prisoner shall be issued a prescription medication, including on-person-medication, without the approval of Health Services. A Prison Officer may issue an over-the-counter medication for the treatment of a minor medical condition after hours and without prior approval. The type and dose of medication, shall be issued in accordance with the instructions provided by Health Services.

Health Services shall be immediately contacted, if there is any doubt or questions about the medication a prisoner is due to be issued.

Any prisoner in possession of unlabelled prescription medication or prescription medication labelled with another prisoner’s details shall be charged with an offence[[1]](#footnote-1), following consultation with Health Services staff. This type of event may result in an incident report in accordance with [COPP 13.1 – Incident Notifications, Reporting and Communications](http://justus/intranet/prison-operations/Pages/prison-copps.aspx).

Prisoners returning from an external medical appointment/admission with prescription medication shall not take the medication until approved by Health Services staff.

Prison Officers shall regularly check the Total Offender Management Solution (TOMS)

‘Medical Status’ to determine whether a prisoner has on person medication.

# Issuing Medication to Prisoners

## Prison Officer responsibilities

### Issuing Officers shall:

1. not issue prescription medication to prisoners unless the medication has been placed in the medication envelopes prepared by Health Services staff

Note: prisoners may be issued antibiotics and some prescription medications in their original packaging instead of a blister pack

1. ensure prescription medications are issued to the prisoner identified on the medication envelope and the medication is consumed in the presence of the Issuing Officer
2. not attend to any other task while administering medication
3. ensure prescription medication is issued to prisoners at the times advised on the medication envelope.

### shall be responsible for ensuring that prisoners consume the medication they have been issued. This shall involve the checking of the prisoners’ mouth.

### If the prisoner refuses the prescription medication or does not present for medication, the Issuing Officer shall record this detail and any other relevant information (e.g. reason) on the medication envelope. The medication envelope is to be provided to Health Services staff as soon as practicable.

### Issuing Officers shall contact Health Services as soon as possible if:

1. the contents of the blister pack are damaged, or
2. the prisoner identifies the supply of the wrong prescription medication.

### For minor medical conditions, such a headache, fever or reflux, Prison Officers may issue a small quantity of an over-the-counter medication such as paracetamol (e.g. Panadol) or antacid (e.g. Mylanta) in consultation with the Nurse Manager/Health Services staff. If medical advice is not available, the most senior Prison Officer shall ensure to record issue of the medication and provide the record to the Nurse Manager as soon as practicable.

### As per [COPP 11.1 Security and Control](http://justus/intranet/prison-operations/Pages/prison-copps.aspx), a Prison Officer shall be present at all medication parades to assist with security and control.

## Prisoner’s responsibilities

### Prisoners shall present with their identification card for prescription medication at times specified by their Unit Manager.

### Prisoners shall consume prescription medication in the presence of the issuing officer, except for on-person-medication. Refer to [Health Services Policy and Procedure Document – On Person Medication (Adult).](http://justus/communities/health-services/Pages/Policy-and-Procedure.aspx)

### Prisoners issued on-person-medication (blister pack or prescription medication in original packaging) shall ensure:

1. blister pack/original pack is safely stored in their room/cell
2. medication is taken as prescribed
3. any problems with a blister pack/original pack is reported immediately to nursing staff.

# Issuing Medication at a Work Camp

## Nurse’s duties

### Restricted medicines shall not be issued to prisoners at a work camp.

### A nurse shall ensure to note the time(s) a prisoner takes prescription medication and these time(s) shall be written on the appropriate form(s).

### The blister packs/original packs are to be delivered regularly (e.g. weekly or monthly) to the Work Camp and be secured under the supervision of the Duty Officer. Except where it is a requirement endorsed on the blister pack/original pack by the nurse or Health Services staff, prisoners are not required to take prescription medication in front of an officer.

### Prisoners shall be issued medication regularly (e.g. each week or month) by the Nurse Manager. Prison Officers shall advise the Nurse Manager of issue(s) affecting the prisoner taking their medication.

## Duties of work camp Prison Officer

### Work Camp Prison Officers shall ensure:

1. the correct contact details for the relevant health personnel in their locality and at the prison the camp is associated with
2. to identify the prisoner receiving the blister pack/original pack against the identification particulars on the dispensing label, medication envelope and recording form or the blister pack and signing sheet and administration record
3. prescription medication from a prepared medication pack is issued to the prisoner identified on the blister pack and the medication is consumed in the presence of the Issuing Officer if directed to do so by the nurse or Health Services staff
4. if the prisoner does not accept the prescription medication or does not present for medication, the Issuing Officer shall indicate the reason on the appropriate form. Regardless of whether the prescription medication is marked essential or not, the Issuing Officer shall contact Health Services staff immediately
5. if the contents of the blister pack/original pack is damaged or broken, the wrong prescription medication has been provided to the prisoner (identified by the prisoner) or the medication has been provided to the prisoner contrary to the instructions on the prepared medication pack, the Issuing Officer shall contact Health Services staff as soon as possible. This type of event may result in an incident report in accordance with [COPP 13.1 – Incident Notifications, Reporting and Communications](http://justus/intranet/prison-operations/Pages/prison-copps.aspx).

## Work camp prisoner responsibilities

### Prisoners are responsible for taking prescription medication at the time(s) indicated on the prepared medication pack.

### Any prescription medication which remains unused, including prescription medication issued to be taken on an “as required” basis, is to be returned to the Officer in Charge (OIC) of the work camp in the blister pack.

# New Prescription Medicines

## General requirements

### Medical Practitioners may prescribe medicines which have not been previously used at a particular location.

### The Nurse Manager shall inform the Security Manager of the new prescription medication to develop a management plan which will minimise opportunity for misuse of the medication. The plan shall be:

1. developed in consultation with health professionals and the Director Health Services
2. communicated to the Superintendent, Nurse Manager and other relevant staff.

# Standing Orders

## General requirements

### Superintendents may develop Standing Orders compliant with this COPP as operationally required.

### For prisons requiring a Standing Order this shall be compliant with [COPP 1.3 – Standing Orders](http://justus/intranet/prison-operations/StandingOrders/Forms/AllItems.aspx) and the Departments [Operational Policy and Procedure Framework](http://justus/intranet/department/standards/Pages/ops-standards.aspx).

### The Standing Order may include procedures for:

### medication issue times

* issuing officer responsibilities
* issuing Schedule 4 and 8 medications
* management of on person medication.

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# Annexures

## Related COPPs and other documents

Related COPPs

* [COPP 1.3 – Standing Orders](http://justus/intranet/prison-operations/StandingOrders/Forms/AllItems.aspx)
* [COPP 11.1 – Security and Control](http://justus/intranet/prison-operations/Pages/prison-copps.aspx)
* [COPP 13.1 – Incident Notifications, Reporting and Communications](http://justus/intranet/prison-operations/Pages/prison-copps.aspx)

Other documents

* [Guiding Principles for Corrections in Australia, 2018](http://justus/intranet/prison-operations/)
* Health Services Policy and Procedure Document – On Person Medication (Adult)
* [Operational Policy and Procedure Framework](http://justus/intranet/department/standards/Pages/ops-standards.aspx)

## Definitions and acronyms

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| Term | Definition  |
| Blister Pack | A heat sealed, tamper evident, individual dose system of medication issue prepared by or under the direct personal supervision of a registered pharmacist e.g. ‘Webster Pak’. |
| Commissioner’s Operating Policy and Procedures (COPP) | COPPs are policy documents provide instructions to staff as to how the relevant legislative requirements are implemented. |
| Guiding Principles for Corrections in Australia, 2018  | The guidelines and the accompanying principles constitute outcomes or goals to be achieved, rather than a set of absolute standards or laws to be enforced. They represent a statement of intent that each Australian State and Territory can use to develop their own range of relevant legislative policy and performance standards to reflect best practice and community demands. |
| Health Services | The health services section of the prison, or the health service provider for the prison, as the case may be.  |
| Issuing Officer | An officer who is authorised to administer medication to prisoners.  |
| Nurse | A nurse registered under the *Nurses Act 1992* and who is authorised by Health Services to issue medication to prisoners. |
| Officer in charge (OIC) | An officer designated as having the charge and superintendence of a prison in the absence of the Superintendent. |
| On-person-medication | Medication prisoners are approved to manage (e.g. carry and administer) on their own. Refer to [Health Services Policy and Procedure Document – On Person Medication (Adult).](http://justus/communities/health-services/Pages/Policy-and-Procedure.aspx)  |
| Over-the-counter medication | Over-the-counter medication is provided without a prescription from a healthcare professional. Minor medical conditions can be treated using this type of medication which includes paracetamol (e.g. Panadol) or antacid (e.g. Mylanta). |
| Prescription medication | Prescription medication is only provided with written authority and instruction from a healthcare professional. |
| Restricted medication | Schedule 8 medications recognised as ‘high risk’ by action of the national Medication Safety Standard. |
| Prison Officer | A person engaged or deemed to have been engaged to be a prison officer under s.13 [*Prisons Act 1981*](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_751_homepage.html). |
| Superintendent | A person designated as a Superintendent under s. 36(1) [*Prisons Act 1981*](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_751_homepage.html) and includes any reference to the position responsible for the management of a private prison under Part IIIA [*Prisons Act 1981*](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_751_homepage.html). Does not extend to the Officer in Charge (OIC) of a prison. |
| TOMS (Total Offender Management Solution) | An electronic database used by the Department of Corrective Services to record and manage comprehensive information relating to prisoners. |
| Unit Manager | The Senior Officer managing the unit in which the prisoner is located. |
| Work Camp | Under s. 23 *Prisons Act* 1981, Work Camps are a designated external facility, outside a prison, where prisoners are confined to facilitate opportunities for them to be provided with work or participate in programmes or activities. |

## Related legislation

* *Poisons Act 1964*
* *Prisons Act 1981*

# Assurance

It is expected that:

1. Prisons will undertake local compliance in accordance with the [Compliance Manual](http://justus/intranet/department/standards/Pages/monitoring.aspx).
2. The relevant Deputy Commissioner within Head Office will undertake management oversight as required.
3. Operational Compliance will undertake checks in accordance with the [Compliance Framework.](http://justus/intranet/department/standards/Pages/monitoring.aspx)
4. Independent oversight will be undertaken as required.

# Document Version History

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Version no | Primary author(s) | Description of version | Date completed | Effective date  |
| 0.1 | Operational Policy | Initial draft | 28 November 2019 | N/A |
| 0.2 | Operational Policy  | Updated following consultation | 15 January 2020 | N/A |
| 0.3 | Operational Policy  | Tabled for approval with the Project Steering Committee | 28 January 2020 | N/A |
| 0.4 | Operational Policy  | Updated following feedback from the Project Steering Committee | 29 February 2020 | N/A |
| 0.5 | Operational Policy  | Minor amendments following consultation  | 26 March 2021 | N/A |
| 1.0 | Operational Policy | Approved by the Director Operational Projects, Policy, Compliance and Contracts | 7 April 2021 | 28 June 2021 |

1. s. 70(d) *Prisons Act 1981* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)