# Destruction of Schedule 8 medicines at community pharmacies

As of 29 September 2023, the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation 2008 will allow a pharmacist who practises at a community pharmacy to destroy a drug of addiction (Schedule 8 medicine) at the pharmacy in the presence of an \*independent witness.

A pharmacist who destroys a Schedule 8 medicine must record the following in the drug register kept at the pharmacy:

(a) the date of destruction,

(b) the name and quantity of the medicine destroyed,

(c) the pharmacist’s name, registration number and signature,

(d) the independent witness’s name, registration number and signature.

\* independent witness means a medical practitioner, nurse practitioner or pharmacist who:

(a) is not employed or otherwise engaged to provide professional services at the pharmacy, and

(b) is not a #family member of the pharmacist, and

(c) if the independent witness is a pharmacist—does not have a financial interest, within the meaning of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW), Schedule 5F, in the pharmacy.

#family member means the person’s:

(a) spouse or de facto partner,

(b) parent or step parent, or a sibling of the person’s parent or step parent,

(c) grandparent or step grandparent,

(d) sibling or step sibling, or a child of the person’s sibling or step sibling,

(e) child or step child,

(f) grandchild or step grandchild.

## How to destroy Schedule 8 medicines

Things to remember:

• Any identified Schedule 8 medicine returned by a patient must be entered into the drug register immediately on receipt listing the patient’s name, address, medicine and quantity.

• Any expired Schedule 8 medicine from pharmacy stock should be must be quarantined from usable stock and transferred to separate page of the register labelled for Schedule 8 medicines for destruction .

• No medicines should be discarded down the sink or into the toilet.

• Schedule 8 medicines from a private health facility or residential care facility need to be destroyed on those premises (and not returned to the pharmacy).

## Methods for Destroying Schedule 8 medicines

Things to have on hand:

• absorbent material such as clay kitty litter or paper towels,

• liquid soap detergent and/or other detergents to render medicines “unusable”,

• sharps bin and/or RUM bin,

• mortar and pestle.

All Schedule 8 medicines for destruction should be removed from packaging (except amps) and rendered unusable.

**Ampoules:** Wrap cardboard box containing the ampoules in paper towel to absorb the liquid, stomp on the box to crush the ampoules, place in a sharps container.

**Liquids:** Pour into absorbent material such as kitty litter, add detergent.

**Tablets/Capsules/Films/Lozenges:**  Place in a heat resistant container such as a mortar and add boiling water and detergent, allow to dissolve over time, crush any remaining solids using the pestle, pour into absorbent material such as kitty litter (start with extended-release products as they take longer to dissolve).

**Transdermal patches:** Remove the patch from packaging, cut patch with scissors in small pieces, add to kitty litter with detergent.

**Cannabis plant material:** Grind using a mortar and pestle, add detergent, pour into absorbent material such as kitty litter.

**Place all destroyed materials other than sharps into a RUM bin and seal closed.**