



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



## Explaining the handling of prescription which contains the narcotic substances and habit forming drugs: An onfield report

Shivani C Sonawale<sup>1</sup>, Sangita V Shelar<sup>1,\*</sup>, Suraj B Kumbhar<sup>1</sup>, Nilima N Khakal<sup>1</sup>, Vikram R Shinde<sup>1</sup>, Rajesh G Jadhao<sup>2</sup>, Parag R Patil<sup>2</sup>, Swati D Raysing<sup>3</sup> and Dipak D Kumbhar<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Late Adv. Dadasaheb Chavan Memorial Institute of Pharmacy, Malwadi, Masur, 415106, Dist. Satara, MS, India.

<sup>2</sup> KYDSCT's College of Pharmacy, Sakegaon, Bhusawal 425 201, Dist., Jalgaon, MS, India.

<sup>3</sup> R. C. Patel Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, Karwand Naka, Shirpur 425405, Dist. Dhule, MS, India..

GSC Biological and Pharmaceutical Sciences, 2022, 19(02), 180–186

Publication history: Received on 13 April 2022; revised on 16 May 2022; accepted on 19 May 2022

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/gscbps.2022.19.2.0192>

### Abstract

The present report deliberates the safe handling of prescription containing the narcotic substances and habit forming drugs. This work is confined to the boundaries of Karad and Umbraj city of satara belonging to Indian state of Maharashtra. Here, we attempted to comprehend the proper handling of prescription containing the narcotic substances and habit forming drugs. For the purpose we met with the various retail pharmacist who discussed about proper handling, dispensing and record maintenance of prescription containing narcotics and habit forming substances. Indeed, the information provided by them is crucial and speculates about a pharmacist perspective while handling prescription encompassing narcotics.

**Keywords:** Narcotics; Prescription; Handling; Pharmacist; Umbraj

### 1. Introduction

Several reports indicates therapeutic benefits of narcotic and psychotropic substances [1, 2]. Though, they can be trafficked and misused. Here it is necessary to realize that India's constitution proscribes the use of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances under Article 47. As per the mandates state should attempt to bring about a restriction for its consumption except for medicinal purposes. Note that three international conventions precisely, Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971 and the UN Convention against illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988 adopts the same principle. India has signed and approved the laid norms of these conventions to prevent drug abuse and trading.

The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985 was framed taking into account India's obligations under the three UN drug Conventions as well as Article 47 of the Constitution mentioned in para above. This act forbids the manufacturing, trading and consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

### 2. Methodology

This project is a part of Continuous Improvement Program (CIP) under Start-Up Cell to Late Adv. Dadasaheb Chavan Memorial Institute of Pharmacy (Diploma), Malwadi – Masur in collaboration with OpEx Accelerated Pvt. Ltd., Kolhapur. The project comprises an on field surveillance of the handling of prescription which contains the narcotic substances

\* Corresponding author: Sangita V Shelar  
Dadasaheb Chavan Memorial Institute of Pharmacy, Malwadi, Masur, 415106, Dist. Satara, MS, India.

and habit forming drugs. For the purpose we visited several retail pharmacy located in tahasil Karad of satara district, Maharashtra, India.

### 2.1. Geographical location

The surveillance was conducted within the boundaries of Umbraj and Karad. Umbraj is a small town in satara district of Maharashtra state, India. Its geographical coordinates are 17° 24' 0" North, and 74° 7' 0" East [3]. On the other hand, Karad is known for Krishna and Koyana river confluence, Preeti Sangam [4] and is located at 17° 28' 59" north and 74°12' 0" coordinates. Based on the Adhar assessment 2021 [5] the total population of Karad taluka is 618,183.

### 2.2. A visit to a retail Pharmacist

In order to comprehend the handling of prescription containing the narcotic substances and habit forming drugs we visited several retail pharmacist located within the aforementioned territory. Precisely this includes Pioneer Medicine Shoppe, Umbraj, owned by Mrs Nisha Rajesh Nikam (B.pharm, License no. : MH-SAT-301604), Shree Samartha Medical Umbraj owned by Mr. Sachin Shete (D. Pharm, 20-२१/1502). The other retailers visited includes Shivdatta Medical Umbraj proprietor by Mr. Varad Kshirsagar (B. Pharm, Reg. no. : 197899), Ayush Medical Umbraj owned by Mr. Mangesh Kate (D. Pharm, License no. : MH-SAT-199852), and the Shivam Medical Umbraj owned by Mrs. Nisha Bhise-Patil (D.Pharm, Reg. no. : 173885). Lastly, we visited Akshay medical Umbraj owned by Mr. Chandrakant Bhintade (D. Pharm, Drug Licence no. : 20SA-1534, 21SA-1534, 20 CSA-1500).

---

## 3. Results and discussion

Initially, we visited to the Pioneer Medicine Shoppe (Fig. 1), wherein we met with the proprietor Mrs. Nisha, who shared her experience regarding the handling of narcotics.



**Figure 1** Pioneer Medicine Shoppe, Umbraj

During her deliberations she spoke about the narcotics and the various records that need to be maintained during their dispensing. She told us that narcotics formerly mentioned medically to any psychoactive compound with numbing or paralyzing properties. She also emphasized on their use in severe pain especially pertaining to cancer or burns.

She also discussed about need and maintenance of record required for dispensing narcotic drugs. As she told the record should include following key elements as name and address of patient, Name, strength, quantity and form of drug, manufacturer of drug, directions for use, name and address of prescriber, identification number of prescription, date of dispensing, signature (authorization) of pharmacists and pharmacy technician (If applicable) while dispensing the prescription. The other elements on record includes price charged, prescriber's registration number and the patient identification number (ID) number and type.

Then we visited Shree Samartha Medical, Umbraj (Fig.2) wherein proprietor Mr. Sachin shete discussed about handling of narcotic & habit forming substances at his pharmacy.



**Figure 2** Shree Samartha Medical, Umbraj

The key excerpt during his deliberation include following points. All licensed pharmacies can involve in the handling of prescription containing narcotic drugs or psychotropic substance. General obligation apply for licensed pharmacies for dispensing of aforementioned drugs. The Schedule I, II and IV narcotic and psychotropic drugs must be dispensed by a licensed pharmacy only and that too upon a prescription by a registered medical practioner. Generally the quantity of narcotic drug dispensed should not exceed the quantity required for one month's treatment. Moreover the pharmacies are advised against the dispensing of injectable containing ketamine, fentanyl, thiopental, esketamine, alfentanil, sodium oxybate, sufentanil, remifentanyl and the oral forms of buprenorphine.

In order to dispense narcotic substance from the pharmacies the order form must be filled and maintained which should contain the name and signature of the person responsible for the handling of narcotic drugs.

Thereafter we visited Shivdatta Medical Umbraj (Fig. 3) wherein the proprietor Varad Kshirsagar elaborated the procedure adopted while handling & dispensing of the prescription containing narcotic or habit forming substances. The prime excerpts during his deliberations include the following points. The patient gives the prescription to community pharmacist. The patient is identified as a returning patient or the new patient (by the stamp of pharmacy on the prescription; the stamp contains name of pharmacy, date and signature of pharmacist). If the patient is new, information regarding the patient's name, age, sex, allergies/ intolerance, contact information, address, medical conditions, current medication, current medication including OTC and insurance information needs to be gathered, especially if the person dropping off the prescription is not the patient.



**Figure 3** Shiv Datta Medical, Umbraj

The prescription is assessed if the medication is new for the patient or if they have had it before, i.e. a repeat on a medication that the patient has used before. For a repeat prescription, old prescription of the same medication can be inactivated even if repeats still exist for that prescription. In case where the pharmacy does not have the medication on hand or in sufficient quantity, the pharmacist should make sure that the patient can acquire the medicine in a sufficient quantity (even to a competitor if need be), or special order the medication (provided it is within a reasonable timeframe). In some countries, a generic substitute is automatically made when available for brand name drugs. If a patient or prescriber wishes for the brand name to be used, they must specify this on the prescription or verbally. The prescription may be identified at this stage for its authenticity by the transcriber to prevent any misuse of drug. Then the prescription is transcribed into the computer software program by accessing the prescription through the centralized prescription database.

At Ayush Medical Umbraj (Fig.4), the proprietor Mr. Mangesh Kate told us about the prescription of Essential narcotic drugs (ENDs).



**Figure 4** Ayush Medical, Umbraj

His deliberation included following parameters. Prescription must be in capital writing, dated and signed by registered medical practitioner with full name and address and his/ her registration number. Prescription must specify name and address of the person to whom prescription is given. Prescription must mention the total quantity of the essential narcotic drugs, daily dose and duration of the prescription.

Later we visited Shivam Medical Umbraj (Fig.5) wherein the proprietor Mrs. Nisha Bhise-Patil provided us an information about record keeping.



**Figure 5** Shivam Medical Umbraj

An important excerpts from her discussion include the following points. It is recommended for pharmacists to keep the records of narcotic substances and habit forming drugs for minimum 5 years: A record of purchase and dispense of medicine should be maintained. The specification of the narcotic drug should agree with the supplier. This should be documented and kept on file in the pharmacy. Note that for verification, pharmacies should maintain certificate of analysis and certificate of conformity from the manufacturer while delivery and must comprise the batch number and expiry details of the product. Besides, to provide an adequate audit trail, the parameters as manufacturer details, the quantity of each sell and supply, and the patient details such as name and address linked to the medicine should also be maintained by pharmacies.

Finally we visited Akshay medical Umbraj (Fig. 6) wherein the proprietor Mr. Chandrakant Bhintade informed us the precautions that should be taken by pharmacist while handling the prescription containing narcotic/ habit forming substances. The key points from his discussion include the following. Confirm that the prescription is correct and complete. Also be careful with zeros and abbreviations. Thoroughly check all the prescriptions. Ensure correct entry of prescription. Beware of look-alike drugs. Always provide patient counselling. Ensure that the supply of medicine is within the law. Ensure that medicines prescribed to patient are suitable. And lastly advising patients about medicines, including how to take them, what reactions may occur and answering patient's questions.



**Figure 6** Akshay Medical, Umbraj

---

#### **4. Conclusion**

Narcotics are the controlled substances under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances act, 1985. Though their medicinal value in relieving pain associated with cancer and burn is indispensable. Hence it is necessary to adopt certain policies while using narcotics and other habit forming substances to circumvent its misuse and subsequent toxicity. This work highlights the proper handling, precautions and significance of record maintenance while dispensing the narcotic or other habit forming substance for therapeutic use. The information provided in this work speculates about the pharmacist perspective towards safe handling of narcotics and other habit forming substances.

---

#### **Compliance with ethical standards**

##### *Acknowledgments*

Authors wish to acknowledge OpEx Accelerated Pvt. Ltd., Kolhapur for their collaboration for this project under CIP (Startup Cell).

##### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

The author declares no conflict of interest.

##### *Statement of informed consent*

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

---

#### **References**

- [1] Hackney AC. Doping, Narcotics, Performance-Enhancing Drugs, and Hormones in Sport: Mechanisms of Action and Methods of Detection. Elsevier. 2017.
- [2] Gałwa-Widera M. Plant-based technologies for removal of pharmaceuticals and personal care products, Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products: Waste Management and Treatment Technology Emerging Contaminants and Micro Pollutants. 2019; 297-319.
- [3] <http://www.maplandia.com/india/maharashtra/satara/umbraj>

- [4] Patil A. Tourist attraction in and around Karad city of satara district Maharashtra. Online International Interdisciplinary Research Journal. 2018; 8: 57-63.
- [5] Population of Karad, <https://www.indiagrowing.com/Maharashtra/Satara/Karad>.