

Scheduling of Gabapentin

The 2019 Virginia General Assembly passed HB2557 which classifies gabapentin as a Schedule V controlled substance as of July 1, 2019. Until then, gabapentin remains classified as a Schedule VI, drug of concern.

On July 1, 2019, pharmacies and other persons or entities that possess gabapentin must take a complete and accurate inventory of gabapentin at the opening of business in accordance with §54.1-3404 and 18VAC110-20-240(4). Recordkeeping must comport to those requirements for a Schedule V controlled substance, and dispensers of gabapentin must begin reporting gabapentin to the Virginia Prescription Monitoring Program as a Schedule V controlled substance rather than a drug of concern.

As of July 1, 2019, the dispensing and refilling of gabapentin shall also comply with the requirements of Board of Pharmacy Regulation 18VAC110-20-320 that a Schedule V controlled substance shall not be dispensed or refilled more than six months after the date on which such prescription was issued, nor may it be refilled more than five times. Dispensers with active prescriptions on file with a date of issuance greater than 6 months or that have been refilled five times or more will be considered expired. While a prescriber should authorize no more than 5 refills of gabapentin beginning July 1, 2019, should a pharmacist receive a prescription authorizing more than 5 refills, the prescription will still expire six months after the date of issuance or after 5 refills, whichever occurs first.

While this scheduling action occurred under State law, the Drug Enforcement Administration has not yet scheduled gabapentin. Therefore, a pharmacy is not required to hold a DEA registration in order to possess and dispense gabapentin, and a prescriber is not required to hold a DEA registration in order to possess or prescribe gabapentin.

Any wholesale drug distributor licensed and regulated by the Board of Pharmacy and registered with and regulated by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration shall have until July 1, 2020, to comply with the storage requirements for Schedule V controlled substances containing gabapentin.

Questions may be directed to pharmbd@dhp.virginia.gov or (804) 367-4456.