

**Prescription Extension  
– What you need to  
know to get started**

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**RCSI**



# Learning Outcomes

- Outline how prescription extension builds on existing professional practice in terms of delivering person-centred care
- Discuss the regulatory requirements and guidance in place for prescription extension as addressed in the Prescription Extension Decision Making Tool
- Describe the key features of shared decision making
- Recognise the key planning points for incorporating prescription extension into pharmacy practice
- Outline resources available to support prescription extension
- Identify any CPD learning needs

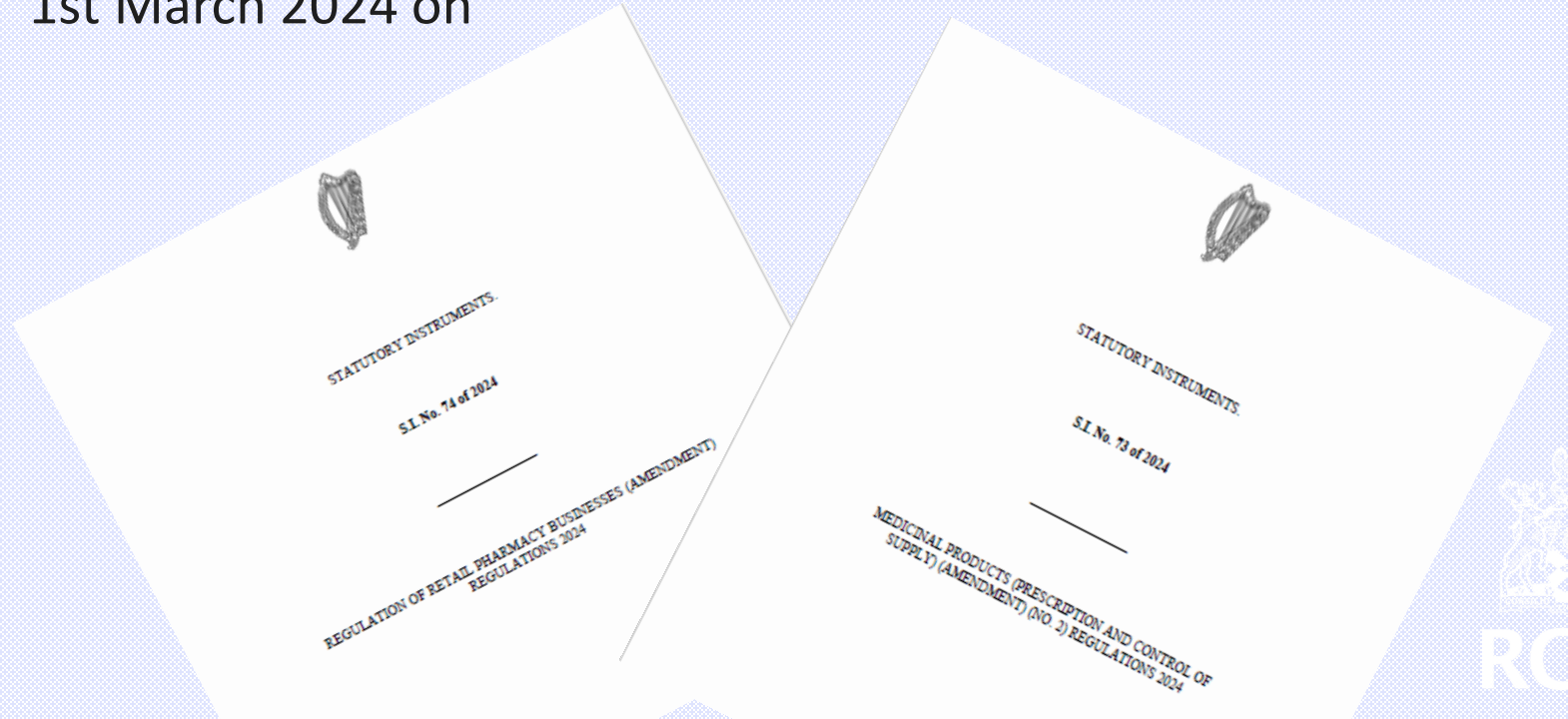
# Background to Introduction of Prescription Extension

- **Expert Taskforce to Support the Expansion of the Role of Pharmacy**
  - Phase 1: Empowering pharmacists to extend prescriptions
  - Phase 2: Empowering pharmacists to prescribe within their Scope of Practice
- Phase 1 Recommendation: ***“...pharmacists should be given the authority to extend prescriptions up a maximum period of 12 months duration”<sup>1</sup>***

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/a90c0-minister-for-health-progresses-enhanced-role-for-pharmacists-following-first-recommendation-of-expert-taskforce/>

# Background to Introduction of Prescription Extension (2)

- Given effect in two statutory instruments
  - Medicinal Products (Prescription & Control of Supply) (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 2024 and
  - Regulation of Retail Pharmacy Businesses (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- Effective from 1st September 2024 for prescriptions issued from 1st March 2024 on



# Building on Existing Practice & Experience

- Medicines Therapy Review & Counselling (Regulation 9)
  - Pharmaceutical and therapeutic appropriateness
- Existing authority to repeat prescriptions for SIB medicines (where no repeat direction specified)
- COVID-19 emergency provisions
- COVID-19 regulatory change research
  - *“It is important that regulatory changes which acknowledge the professional competency of the pharmacist and their capacity to effectively discharge their professional discretion as appropriate in the interests of their patients, are retained and further expanded so as to maximise their contribution to the delivery of healthcare & improving patient outcomes”<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>Lynch M, O'Leary AC. COVID-19 related regulatory change for pharmacists–The case for its retention post the pandemic. Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy. 2021 Jan 1;17(1):1913-9.

# Prescription Extension Toolkit

- Prescription Extension Decision Making Tool
- Supporting References & Resources
- Sample Case Scenarios
- Available on <https://iiop.ie/content/prescription-extension-suite-resources>

# Decision Making Tool

- 6 step process developed to guide pharmacists in the shared decision making process for prescription extension with their patients
- This tool incorporates
  - Regulatory requirements
  - PSI Guidelines to support Medicines Therapy Review, Counselling & Prescription Extension



[https://www.thepsi.ie/sites/default/files/2024-07/PSI\\_Guidelines\\_to\\_support\\_Medicines\\_Therapy\\_Review\\_Counselling\\_and\\_Prescription\\_Extension.pdf](https://www.thepsi.ie/sites/default/files/2024-07/PSI_Guidelines_to_support_Medicines_Therapy_Review_Counselling_and_Prescription_Extension.pdf)

# 6 Steps

**Step 1**

•Is the prescription eligible to be lawfully extended?

**Step 2**

•Does the prescription continue to be pharmaceutically & therapeutically appropriate?

**Step 3**

•Does the patient have a continuing need or chronic condition(s) that supports extension of the prescription?

**Step 4**

•What is the patient's history with the prescribed medicinal product(s)?

**Step 5**

•Is the decision to extend in compliance with proper patient care, any requirements described in regulatory guidance and in the patient's best interests?

**Step 6**

•How do I proceed following the decision to extend/not extend?





## Step 1 - Is the prescription eligible to be lawfully extended?

### Prescription Features that exclude extension:

1. “Do not extend” is written by the prescribing practitioner on the prescription
2. Prescription issued for a period either less than 6 months or greater than 6 months
3. Prescription issued before 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024
4. A prescription for the following medicinal products is not eligible to be extended:
  - Controlled Drugs listed in Schedules 2, 3 & 4 of Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2017 as amended i.e. CD 2, 3 or 4 drugs (3)
  - Medicinal Products excluded for patient safety or operational and reimbursement reasons. Please see [Pharmacy Circulars - HSE.ie](https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/pharmacy/circulars/) for up to date guidance (as of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 exclusions are High Tech medications and Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)) (5)

Where a prescription specifies a number of medicinal products, and one or more of them are not eligible for prescription extension (for example a controlled drug), it is advised to consider whether it is safe and proper patient care and in the best interests of the patient to extend the prescription for the remaining medicinal products (see **Step 5**)

### What next?

#### Eligible

✓ Proceed to **Step 2**

**OR**

#### Not eligible:

➤ Proceed to **Step 6**



## Step 2 Does the prescription continue to be pharmaceutically & therapeutically appropriate?

### Prescription Review

Consider whether the prescription as previously dispensed, continues to fulfil the requirements of Regulation 9 as amended (1) in terms of screening for potential therapy problems, including:

- Therapeutic duplication
- Interactions with other medicinal products (including serious interactions with non-prescription medicinal products, herbal products, or foods)
- Incorrect dosage or duration of treatment
- Allergic reactions
- Clinical abuse and/or misuse

Other relevant considerations:

- Any signs or symptoms indicative of a possible adverse reaction?
- Antimicrobials are not excluded from prescription extension. However, it is recommended to take account of current guidance from the HSE's Antimicrobial Resistance & Infection Control (AMRIC) team ([Antibiotic Prescribing - HSE.ie](https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/antibioticprescribing))(6)

### What next?

✓ If satisfied as to the continued pharmaceutical and therapeutic appropriateness of the prescription, then proceed to **Step 3**

**OR**

➤ If not satisfied, proceed to **Step 6**

## Step 3 Does the patient have a continuing need or chronic condition(s) that supports the extension of the prescription?

### Continuing Need or Chronic Condition

In consultation with the patient/representative, consider the following:

- What are the individual patient circumstances, including, clarifying what chronic condition(s) they have as appropriate? The HSE defines a chronic disease as a “*long-term health condition that needs ongoing treatment and management*” (7)
- Does the patient need to continue to take the medicinal product(s) prescribed?

### What next?

✓ If satisfied as to the patient’s continuing need or chronic conditions(s), then proceed to **Step 4**

**OR**

➤ If not satisfied, proceed to **Step 6**

## Step 4 What is the patient's history with the prescribed medicinal product(s)?

### Review of Patient History

In discussion with the patient/representative and with the Patient Medication Record (PMR) available in the pharmacy, for the period since the prescription was issued, assess the patient's:

- Compliance with the prescribed medicinal products
- History with the prescribed medicinal product(s) and that it is unchanged
- Condition(s) are satisfactorily managed with their current prescribed medicinal product(s) without the need for any intervention or changes to their therapy

Other relevant issues for consideration:

- Are there any monitoring/testing requirements associated with the patient's prescribed therapy?
- Has the patient been taking any medication not included on the PMR?
- Any serious interactions with non-prescription medicinal products, herbal products, or foods?
- When is the patient next due to be reviewed including any review at an out-patient service in a hospital?

### What next?

If you are satisfied that:

- ✓ the patient's history with the prescribed medicinal product(s) on their prescription is unchanged and
- ✓ that other related issues such as compliance, monitoring and impending appointments are accounted for, then proceed to **Step 5**

**OR**

- If not satisfied, proceed to **Step 6**

# Step 5 Is the decision to extend in compliance with proper patient care, any requirements described in regulatory guidance and in the patient's best interest?

## Pharmacist Self-Reflection & Review of Steps 1-4

Are you satisfied:

- As to the sufficiency of your expertise, clinical competence, knowledge, and understanding of the patient's condition(s) and their prescribed medicinal product(s), along with any other relevant information, to make a decision to extend the prescription in discussion with the patient/representative?
- That having engaged in dialogue with the patient/representative as per Steps 1 – 4, extension of the prescription, provides safe and proper patient care, serves the patient's best interests and concurs with any additional regulatory requirements and PSI guidance in place at the time? (8, 9)

## What next?

If satisfied, you are now in a position to extend your patient's prescription:

- ✓ For a period not exceeding 12 months from the date specified on the prescription
- ✓ In discussion with the patient/representative you may extend the prescription for any period of time e.g. 1 month, 2 months etc. up to a maximum period of 6 months

## OR

- If not satisfied, then you are not in a position to extend the validity of the patient's prescription

In both cases proceed to **Step 6**

## Step 6 - How do I proceed following the decision to extend/not extend?

### Satisfied to extend prescription:

Engage with the patient/representative:

- To advise them that you will extend the period of validity of their prescription for a specified period of time
- To provide them with the relevant detail which informed this decision including the rationale for your decision (if not already addressed in your discussions to this point)
- To provide them with any monitoring or follow-up required
- To let them know that you will inform the original prescribing practitioner of the prescription extension
- To counsel them as normal on the continued safe and effective use of the medicinal product(s)(1)

2. Record the following details in the patient's PMR so that they appear on the pharmacy's daily prescription record print-out:

- a) Date of the decision to extend
- b) Your name and PSI registration number
- c) Details of the review undertaken, and your decision to extend
- d) The method (telephone, email etc.) used to notify the original prescribing practitioner of prescription extension

3. Make reasonable efforts to ensure the practitioner who prescribed the medicinal product(s) i.e. the practitioner who issued the prescription or another relevant primary healthcare provider, is informed of the decision to extend the prescription within 7 days following the decision

## Step 6 How do I proceed following the decision to extend/not extend?

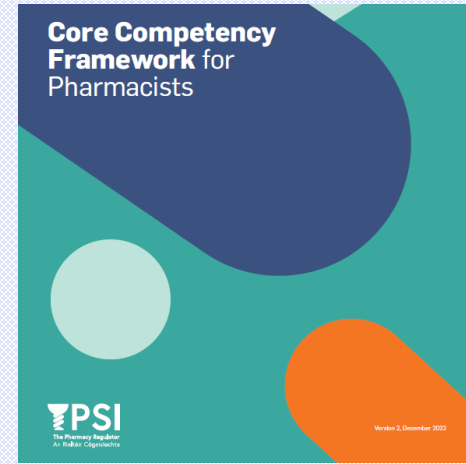
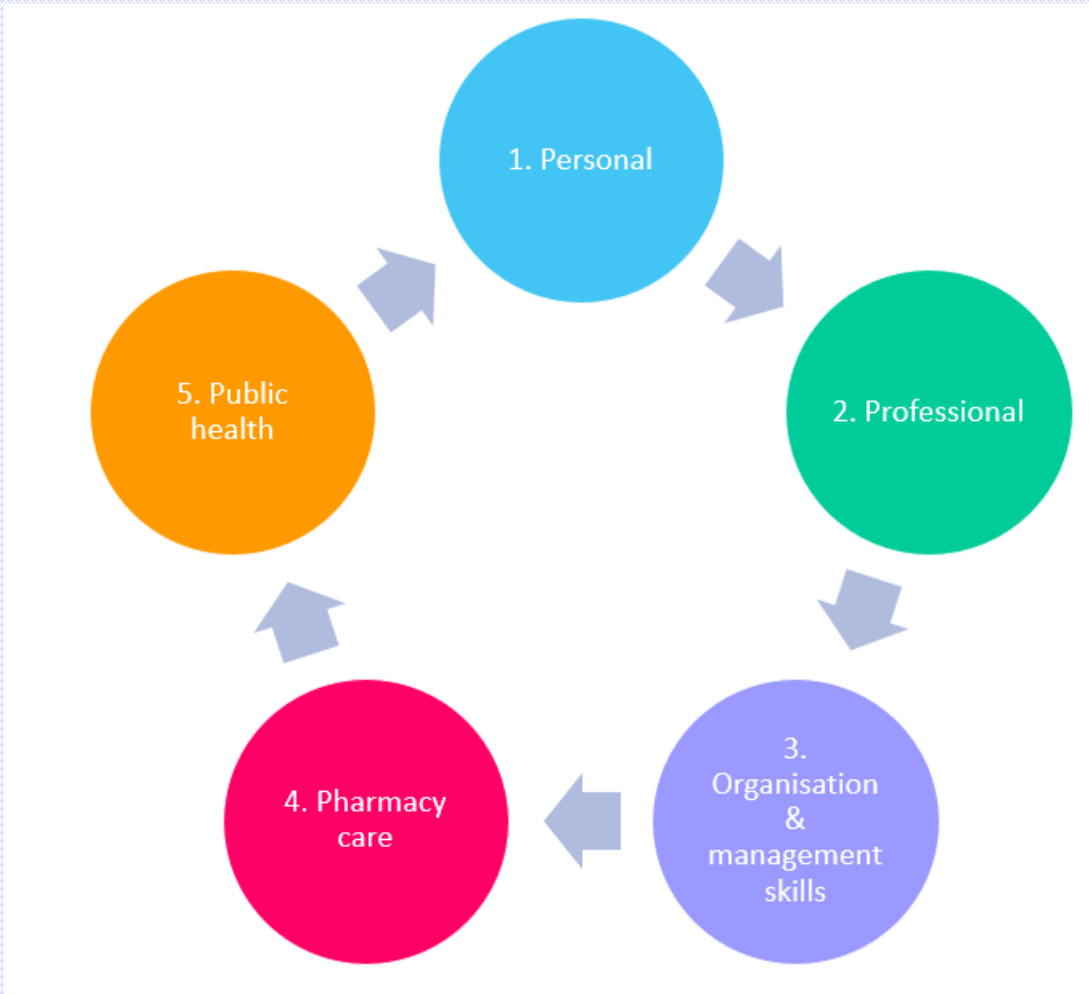
### Not satisfied to extend prescription:

1. Engage with the patient:
  - To advise them that you are not in a position to extend the period of validity of their prescription
  - To provide them with the relevant detail which informed this decision including the rationale for it. If a prescription is not eligible for extension for one of the reasons specified in **Step 1**, advise them of this
  - To refer them back to their prescribing practitioner and
  - If required, explore emergency supply options with them
2. As per PSI guidance, record the rationale for this decision in the patient's PMR

# Post Extension Follow-up Care

- At each subsequent dispensing of an extended prescription, continue to review and assess the pharmaceutical and therapeutic appropriateness of the prescribed medicinal product(s) (1).
  - Following this review, it may be concluded that continuing to dispense the prescription does not provide safe and proper care and would not be in the patient's best interests.
  - Accordingly, you may choose not to dispense the prescription.
  - In such circumstances, engage with the patient/representative to advise them of this and provide them with all the relevant detail which informed this decision including the rationale for it.
  - Refer the patient back to their prescribing practitioner, and if required, explore emergency supply options with them.





<b>1. Personal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1.1</b> Demonstrates leadership</li><li><b>1.2</b> Confidently makes sound decisions and solves problems</li><li><b>1.3</b> Establishes and maintains collaborative working relationships</li><li><b>1.4</b> Communicates effectively</li></ul>
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# Shared Decision Making

- Traditionally regarded as a collaborative approach between patients and healthcare providers regarding available care options to select the best course of action
- Emphasis on communication of preferences
- Proposed as an expression of patient-centred care
- Shared Decision Making can be applied in the context of prescription extension where a dialogue occurs between a patient/representative and the pharmacist



# Four guiding questions (HSE's Shared Decision Making Tool Skills Card)

## 1. Share your thinking

- > Define the problem
- > Find out the level of involvement the patient wants

## 2. Explore options

- > Present options
- > Discuss pros and cons
- > Explore patient values and preferences

## 3. Negotiate the plan

- > Check/clarify each other's understanding
- > Make or explicitly defer decision

## 4. Check with the patient

- > Have the patient's ideas, concerns and expectations been addressed
- > Ask for any additional questions
- > Make plans to review the decision in the future

# Incorporating Prescription Extension into your practice (1)

## Who?

### Patient initiated

- Driving factors
- Expectations

### Pharmacist initiated

### Pharmacist members

- Effective communication

## Where?

Pharmacy counter

Consultation room

Telephone



# Incorporating Prescription Extension into your practice (2)

## When?

Consider how pharmacy will continue to operate while you are engaged in a prescription extension consultation

Appointment

Set days per week?

Patient contact details

## What?

Administrative details

- Appropriate records
- Notification to prescriber

Staff training

- Communication with patients

SOPs

Professional Indemnity



# References and Supporting Resources

- Range of references with the toolkit together with links to access
- A number of resources to further support prescription extension available at <https://iiop.ie/content/prescription-extension-suite-resources> including:
  - Prescription Extension Webinar (August 2024)
  - Expansion of the Role of Pharmacists – What’s coming in 2024? Webinar (February 2024)
  - Pharmacy & Medicines Legislation Training Programme (2024)
  - IIOOP Training Resources - various online training programmes in areas such as diabetes, cardiovascular risk, chronic respiratory illness, polypharmacy & medication review

# Wrap up

## Revisiting Learning Outcomes

- Outline how prescription builds on existing professional practices in terms of delivering person-centred care
- Discuss the regulatory requirements in place for prescription extension as addressed in the Prescription Extension Toolkit
- Describe the key features of shared decision making
- Recognise the key planning points needed to incorporate prescription extension into pharmacy practice
- Outline resources available to support prescription extension
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## Prescription Extension Workshops

- 26<sup>th</sup> September , 16<sup>th</sup> October and 22<sup>nd</sup> October



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Thank you





Time  
for.....

