



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH  
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## INTERNET PRESCRIBING AND PRESCRIPTIONS

The Michigan Public Health Code, PA 368 of 1978, MCL 333.17751(2) states: "a pharmacist may dispense a prescription written and signed or transmitted by other means of communication by a physician prescriber in a state other than Michigan, but not including a prescription for a controlled substance as defined in section 7104 except under circumstances described in section 17763(g), only if the pharmacist in the exercise of his or her professional judgment determines all of the following:

- (a) That the prescription was issued pursuant to an existing physician-patient relationship.
- (b) That the prescription is authentic.
- (c) That the prescribed drug is appropriate and necessary for the treatment of an acute, chronic, or recurrent condition.

The Michigan Board of Pharmacy, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, and the Federation of State Medical Boards all consider prescriptions issued pursuant only to an Internet questionnaire to be invalid. There is no existing physician-patient relationship when the physician and patient have not interacted except on the basis of an online questionnaire.

For the past year, the Bureau of Health Professions has been contacted by a number of Michigan pharmacies inquiring about this practice after they have been contacted by Internet operators. The Internet operator keeps the majority of the profit while the pharmacy, pharmacist and physician are disciplined by their professional licensing boards. If you are contacted by an Internet operator, you should be aware that you may be participating in a transaction that is not legal in Michigan.

Some of these Internet operators will avoid prescriptions for controlled substances in order to steer clear of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), but that will not prevent the appropriate licensing board from sanctioning your professional license.

If you have questions about Internet prescriptions, you may contact the Bureau of Health Professions, Health Investigation Division at (517) 373-1737.