

Standards for the supply of Emergency Contraceptive Pill by Pharmacists

The Pharmacy Council of New Zealand prescribes the following standards for the non-prescription supply by pharmacists of the levonorgestrel Emergency Contraceptive Pill.

The Charge Pharmacist of a pharmacy from which is provided a service for the supply of the Emergency Contraceptive Pill must ensure that the following standards are observed when the supply of emergency hormonal contraception is not dispensed pursuant to the prescription of a medical practitioner, midwife or designated prescriber, or in accordance with a standing order.

ECP Standard 1

The Emergency Contraceptive Pill (ECP) must be supplied only by pharmacists who have become accredited providers of emergency hormonal contraception after completing successfully an education programme accredited by the Pharmacy Council of New Zealand.

ECP Standard 2

Requests for emergency contraception must be received sensitively, with due regard for the woman's right to privacy and confidentiality. In all cases, the woman must be offered the opportunity for the consultation to be conducted in a private area.

ECP Standard 3

The pharmacist must attend to the request personally and assess whether to supply the medicine or refer the woman to an appropriate health care professional.

ECP Standard 4

The pharmacist must ensure that all necessary advice and information is provided in an appropriate manner to enhance the woman's understanding, and to enable her to make an informed choice and give consent to the supply of the medicine.

ECP Standard 5

The pharmacist must supply the ECP directly to the woman herself, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

ECP Standard 6

The pharmacist must record the supply of the ECP as a dispensed medicine.

ECP Standard 7

The pharmacist must label the medicine with its name, directions for use, date of supply, the name of the woman for whom the medicine is intended (unless she wishes that information not to be recorded) prescription number, and the name and address of the pharmacy.

ECP Standard 8

The pharmacist must make reasonable efforts to inform the woman about the limitations of the ECP as an ongoing method of contraception, and where appropriate provide information about regular methods of contraception, sexual health matters and disease prevention, or advise her where to obtain further information.

ECP Standard 9

The pharmacist must advise the woman to seek from a doctor or family planning clinic further advice if her next period is lighter than usual, late or different in any way, or if any other unusual bleeding or lower abdominal pain occurs.