

## Medication samples

### Background

The Model Regulatory Guideline for the Distribution of Medication Samples by Pharmacists was approved by NAPRA council and adopted by the council of the Alberta College of Pharmacy on September 29, 2001.

### Guideline

A medication sample is defined as a trial package of medication distributed to the pharmacist without cost. It would not include “free or bonus goods” provided as part of a larger purchase.

A pharmacist may dispense sample medication pursuant to a prescription, labeled in compliance with the rules governing labeling in the jurisdiction and may charge a professional fee but not charge for the cost of the medication. The pharmacist must inform the patient when medication samples are being dispensed.

Where the medication sample contains a Schedule 1 drug (as defined in Canada’s National Drug Scheduling System), a prescription is required for distribution to the patient.

Distribution to patients of sample medication containing Schedule 2, 3, or unscheduled drugs does not require a prescription. The distribution must be done however, in compliance with the conditions for sale set out in Canada’s National Drug Scheduling System and the labeling requirements under the Regulations to the *Food and Drugs Act*. Without further packaging or labeling, there should be no charge for distributing the manufacturer’s packaged sample of non-prescription medication.