Drug Enforcement Administration, Justice

§ 1311.170 Transmission requirements.

(a) The electronic prescription application must transmit the electronic prescription as soon as possible after signature by the practitioner.

(b) The electronic prescription application may print a prescription that has been transmitted only if an intermediary or the designated pharmacy notifies a practitioner that an electronic prescription was not successfully delivered to the designated pharmacy. If this occurs, the electronic prescription application may print the prescription for the practitioner’s manual signature. The printed prescription must include information noting that the prescription was originally transmitted electronically to [name of the specific pharmacy] on [date/time] and that transmission failed.

(c) The electronic prescription application may print copies of the transmitted prescription if they are clearly labeled: “Copy only—not valid for dispensing.” Data on the prescription may be electronically transferred to medical records, and a list of prescriptions written may be printed for patients if the list indicates that it is for informational purposes only and not for dispensing.

(d) The electronic prescription application must not allow the transmission of an electronic prescription if an original prescription was printed prior to attempted transmission.

(e) The contents of the prescription required by part 1306 of this chapter must not be altered during transmission between the practitioner and pharmacy. Any change to the content during transmission, including truncation or removal of data, will render the electronic prescription invalid. The electronic prescription data may be converted from one software version to another between the electronic prescription application and the pharmacy application; conversion includes altering the structure of fields or machine language so that the receiving pharmacy application can read the prescription and import the data.

(f) An electronic prescription must be transmitted from the practitioner to
the pharmacy in its electronic form. At no time may an intermediary convert an electronic prescription to another form (e.g., facsimile) for transmission.

§ 1311.200 Pharmacy responsibilities.

(a) Before initially using a pharmacy application to process controlled substance prescriptions, the pharmacy must determine that the third-party auditor or certification organization has found that the pharmacy application does the following accurately and consistently:

(1) Import, store, and display the information required for prescriptions under §1306.05(a) of this chapter.

(2) Import, store, and display the indication of signing as required by §1311.120(b)(17).

(3) Import, store, and display the number of refills as required by §1306.22 of this chapter.

(4) Import, store, and verify the practitioner’s digital signature, as provided in §1311.210(c), where applicable.

(b) If the third-party auditor or certification organization has found that a pharmacy application does not accurately and consistently import, store, and display other information required for prescriptions under this chapter, the pharmacy must not process electronic prescriptions for controlled substances that are subject to the additional information requirements.

(c) If a pharmacy application provider notifies a pharmacy that a third-party audit or certification report indicates that the application or the application provider no longer meets the requirements of this part or notifies it that the application provider has identified an issue that makes the application non-compliant, the pharmacy must immediately cease to process controlled substance prescriptions using the application.

(d) A pharmacy that receives a notification that the pharmacy application is not in compliance with the requirements of this part must not use the application to process controlled substance prescriptions until it is notified that the application is again compliant and all relevant updates to the application have been installed.

(e) The pharmacy must determine which employees are authorized to enter information regarding the dispensing of controlled substance prescriptions and annotate or alter records of these prescriptions (to the extent such alterations are permitted under this chapter). The pharmacy must ensure that logical access controls in the pharmacy application are set so that only such employees are granted access to perform these functions.

(f) When a pharmacist fills a prescription in a manner that would require, under part 1306 of this chapter, the pharmacist to make a notation on the prescription if the prescription were a paper prescription, the pharmacist must make the same notation electronically when filling an electronic prescription and retain the annotation electronically when filling the prescription record or in linked files. When a prescription is received electronically, the prescription and all required annotations must be retained electronically.

(g) When a pharmacist receives a paper or oral prescription that indicates that it was originally transmitted electronically to the pharmacy, the pharmacist must check its records to ensure that the electronic version was not received and the prescription dispensed. If both prescriptions were received, the pharmacist must mark one as void.

(h) When a pharmacist receives a paper or oral prescription that indicates that it was originally transmitted electronically to another pharmacy, the pharmacist must check with that pharmacy to determine whether the prescription was received and dispensed. If the pharmacy that received the original electronic prescription had not dispensed the prescription, that pharmacy must mark the electronic version as void or canceled. If the pharmacy that received the original electronic prescription dispensed the prescription, the pharmacy with the paper version must not dispense the paper prescription and must mark the prescription as void.

(i) Nothing in this part relieves a pharmacy and pharmacist of the responsibility to dispense controlled substances only pursuant to a prescription issued for a legitimate medical purpose.