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# Why E-Prescribe?

## A simple way to improve safety & efficiency

### Paper or Non-Electronic Prescriptions Create Problems With Care Delivery

- There is no easy way to check for:
  - Drug-to-drug interactions
  - Adverse reactions
  - Contraindications
- Valuable staff time is spent on the phone with pharmacies deciphering or verifying prescriptions.
- There is always the danger of a patient altering a prescription (adding more refills, changing the quantity, etc).

### Why Should I Electronically Prescribe (E-Prescribe)?

- It is a **safer method** than handing a prescription directly to the patient.
- At the pharmacy, it is generally assumed that when an e-prescription is sent, the patient is on his or her way, so the **prescription is expedited**.
- Prescribers have had the ability to send a **controlled e-prescription** to the pharmacy since 2012 and electronic prescribing of controlled substances (EPCS) is safer and more efficient.
- It improves patient safety by **automatically** saving the new e-prescription in the patient's drug file versus flipping through a paper chart to find the medication list.
- It helps to reduce transcription **errors**.
- Electronic health record (EHR) systems have **clinical drug alerts** – these can be managed in the EHR to reflect your practice needs.
- Prescription **errors can be reduced by 50 percent** or more by using alerts.
- The future of prescription delivery is e-prescribing: Minnesota, Maine and New York now require prescriptions to be delivered electronically.



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## Roadblocks?

- **Not currently able to e-prescribe?**  
Contact your EHR vendor for options. Don't forget to get to add electronic prescribing for controlled substance (EPCS) functionality.
- **Faster to give a paper prescription?**  
With onsite pharmacies that might be the case, but, but since you can't guarantee the patient will bring the prescription to the pharmacy, e-prescribing is often faster and delivery is assured.
- **Worried e-prescribing will slow you down?**  
A small investment of time pays off in increased efficiency. For example, favorite drug lists can be created in most EHR systems – contact your vendor for more information.
- **Worried your e-prescription order won't get delivered to the pharmacy?**  
Only 5 percent of paper prescriptions given to a patient arrive at the pharmacy. If you send an e-prescription, it will arrive at the pharmacy.

## Best Practices

- Educate your patients about e-prescribing – assure them that the prescription is sent securely to the pharmacy of their choice
- Train all members of your team in the features of your EHR and integrate it into a patient workflow
- Avoid batching or queuing prescriptions before transmitting to the pharmacy
- Find out if your EHR has capabilities to send electronic prescriptions for controlled substances (EPCS)
- Designate an e-prescribing expert in your office and have them monitor the progress

## Available Resources

Health Current can help with e-prescribing by answering questions and assisting you overcome any barriers you may encounter. Email [erx@healthcurrent.org](mailto:erx@healthcurrent.org) or call us at (602) 688-7200.

Additional resources and reference information are also available at <https://healthcurrent.org/information-center/e-prescribing/>

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