

Decision of the Pharmacy Board of Australia

Performance and Professional Standards Panel

Jurisdiction: Western Australia

Date of Hearing: 7 May 2013

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Classification of Notification:

Pharmacy/Medication: inappropriate, unlawful or inaccurate dispensing

Allegations

It was alleged that a pharmacist behaved in a way that constituted unsatisfactory professional performance under section 191(1)(b)(i) of the National Law, in that they made a dispensing error by failing to:

- a. select the correct medication from the dispensary shelf
- b. affix a label to the medication which corresponded to the medication
- c. check the label details against the medication package
- d. use a barcode scanner when dispensing the medication and
- e. identify the mistake during the final check.

Finding

The pharmacist admitted to the error and accepted that the conduct giving rise to the error constituted unsatisfactory professional performance. On this basis, the panel found that the practitioner had engaged in unsatisfactory professional performance and had failed in all the ways alleged. The pharmacist had not used the barcode scanner on this occasion as they were unfamiliar with the dispensing system used by the pharmacy. The panel found that while barcode scanners are useful tools in ensuring dispensing errors are not made, their use did not abrogate a practitioner's responsibility to ensure that all other checks are performed to minimise the risk of such an error occurring.

Determination

The panel cautioned the practitioner.