

## Queries on technical errors

*Pharmacists are able to amend a CD prescription where there is a minor typographical error, spelling mistake or where the total quantity of the CD or the number of dosage units as the case may be is specified in either words or figures but not both. Pharmacists will have to exercise all due diligence and be satisfied on reasonable grounds that the prescription is genuine and that they are supplying in accordance with the intentions of the prescriber. The pharmacist will need to amend the prescription in ink or otherwise indelibly to correct the error or omission and mark the prescription so that the amendment is attributable to him / her.*

1. The **date**, the **dose** or **form** of the controlled drug is missing from the prescription, can I add it?

No, the only errors that pharmacists can amend are minor typographical errors or spelling mistakes or where the total quantity of the preparation of the CD or the number of dosage units as the case may be, is specified in either words or figures but not both i.e. they can add the words or figures to the CD prescription if one or the other has been omitted.

2. Can I add the total quantity in words and figures if neither is on the prescription?

No, the total quantity of the preparation of the CD or the number of dosage units as the case may be, **must** be specified in either words **or** figures. The pharmacist can then add either the words or figures to the CD prescription depending on which have been omitted.

3. Can I add the words or figures if the words and figures do not match?

No, the view of the Home Office is that it would be stretching the technical amendment provisions too far to suggest that as the words and figures do not match one of them has therefore technically been omitted. Thus such an error cannot be amended by the pharmacist. Therefore a prescription which has a total quantity written as 2x28 (fifty six) or 56 (two times twenty eight) cannot be amended by the pharmacist. The prescription should be written as either 2x28 (two times twenty eight) or 56 (fifty six).

4. What is a typographical error and what is the difference between this and a spelling mistake?

Whilst the strict definition of the term 'typographical error' would apply to errors made during the typing process, the Home Office have advised that this also extends to handwritten errors. Minor typographical errors may include, for example, a number being substituted for a letter or two letters being inverted but where the prescriber's intention is still clear.

5. What details do I have to add to say that an amendment on the CD prescription is attributable to me?

Legislation does not specify what has to be written, only that the amendment must be clearly attributable to the professional who amended the CD prescription for audit purposes.

6. Do I have to write my name, registration number, signature or all three?

Good practice would suggest that you sign or write your name or your registration number on the prescription.

7. Where should I add these details on the CD prescription?

These details could either be written above / below the amendment in the body of the prescription, or on the side of the prescription as an endorsement. If there is more than one amendment on the same prescription, each amendment would require the aforementioned details to be added.

8. What happens if one pharmacist has made the amendment to the CD prescription but it is another pharmacist who makes the supply?

When an amendment is made by one pharmacist (A) and a second pharmacist (B) makes the supply, for example because there is an owing, both pharmacists must be satisfied of the integrity of the prescription.

Whilst pharmacist B does not have to duplicate the amendment made by pharmacist A, they must satisfy themselves that the prescription is genuine and that they are supplying in accordance with the prescriber's intention. The Home Office has stated that in this situation Pharmacist B should also mark the prescription to indicate that the amendment is attributable to him / herself as well as Pharmacist A. If you are not going to make a supply against the prescription then it is best practice that you do not amend the prescription i.e. if you receive a prescription but do not have the item in stock.