FOREWORD

Over the years, the Pharmacy Council, Ghana has developed and rolled out several strategies with the view to ensuring that pharmaceutical facilities and pharmaceutical service providers are evenly distributed across the country to improve access to pharmaceutical service.

Notwithstanding the fact that the strategies have chalked some success in terms of distribution, more needs to be done, portions of our population remain underserved, and even in places which are well served, a lack of knowledge as to where to find a particular medical product usually becomes a major challenge to access, resulting sometimes in unpleasant consequences for patients.

The Council, therefore, intends to use regulation and technology as a developmental tool to improve access to quality pharmaceutical care, health promotion and disease prevention whilst creating sustainable jobs for the teeming youth of Ghana.

It is my wish that all practitioners and facility owners, platform manager(s), other service providers and the general public will take advantage of the opportunities presented by the policy and take steps necessary to comply with the structures, procedures, guidelines and standards outlined in this document for accessing or delivering the appropriate ePharmacy service required.

I call on all stakeholders to collaborate with the Pharmacy Council as we rollout this new ePharmacy policy and guidelines, which will form the basis for the deployment of electronic pharmacy services in particular and eHealth services in general throughout the country.

Pharm Alhaji Dr. Audu Rauf
Registrar

ELECTRONIC PHARMACY POLICY

2021


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POLICY BACKGROUND

Premise of the Policy

The advent of the Internet and other related technologies have led to a spike in e-commerce, where consumers seek to purchase various products and services online. In response, the idea of online or electronic pharmacy (ePharmacy), including the sale of prescription and non-prescription medicines online is increasingly becoming a global phenomenon, though unevenly, for more than two decades. Pharmaceutical trade in Ghana has also witnessed the same, with some pharmacies offering doorstep deliveries as a standard service.

In an era of global pandemics, like the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the demand for electronic pharmacy services has been strengthened. These electronic pharmacies offer the advantage of delivering medicines or medical products with convenience, privacy and sometimes to remote places with no or limited access to pharmacies. Other benefits include the opportunities to monitor patient drug usage behaviour and analyse patterns to inform practice and policy. Further, the dependence on third persons for the procurement of medicines is reduced, especially for the elderly and the chronically ill. Hence, patients take responsibility and become more empowered and satisfied with service delivery.

However, in markets where online or electronic pharmacies are not regulated, these benefits may not be achieved, and there is a potential of selling counterfeit and unapproved drugs and even prescription drugs without valid or authenticated requests.

In this respect, the Pharmacy Council has identified the need and provides a policy that defines the governance mechanisms for the registration.
administration, operations and closure of online or electronic pharmacies.

Purpose of the Policy

The Pharmacy Council, Ghana is committed to securing in the public interest, the highest standards in the practice of pharmacy by ensuring that pharmaceutical service providers have the right qualification, practice in accordance with set standards and are accessible to the whole population.

In line with this commitment, this policy seeks to provide continuity in the quality and climate of delivering pharmaceutical services electronically. It is primarily designed for pharmacies, pharmacists, other healthcare professionals, civil society and the general public on the conditions for the operations and utilization of ePharmacy and ePharmacy services in Ghana.

This policy ensures compliance with applicable laws and regulations, promotes operational efficiency and manages institutional risk by specifying guidelines for ePharmacy registration, administration, operations and closure.

This policy and other relevant documents can be accessed at www.pcghana.org

Application and Scope

The policy provides for a National Electronic Pharmacy Platform (NEPP) and further seeks to provide an enabling environment for the provision of electronic pharmacy services. It shall apply to the NEPP and all pharmaceutical services delivered electronically. These include but are not limited to:

1. Registration of an Electronic Pharmacy
2. Administration of Electronic Pharmacies
3. Scope of Operations of Electronic Pharmacies
    i. Prescription Management
    ii. Sale and Delivery
    iii . Refill
    iv. Pharmaceutical Care
    v. Monitoring and Control
    vi. Security of Patient/Client/Health Facility Data
    vii. Consumer Education
4. Closure or Revocation of Registration

DEFINITIONS

Electronic Pharmacy (ePharmacy)

An ePharmacy is a registered retail pharmacy that engages in the business of distribution or sale, stock, exhibit or offer for sale of drugs through an online portal or any other electronic mode. This refers to a registered online, internet or mail-order pharmacy that operates over the internet and sends the orders to customers through the mail or courier/delivery companies. Electronic pharmacies shall only use the NEPP, either directly or indirectly, to provide electronic pharmacy services.

National Electronic Pharmacy Platform (NEPP)

This is a technological platform commissioned and authorised by the Pharmacy Council to facilitate electronic pharmacy services.

Pharmaceutical Services

These are services pertaining to pharmacists and pharmaceutical support staff in approved premises and the conditions under which those services may be provided. This encompasses the procurement, dispensing, counselling, distribution, storage and control of all pharmaceuticals used within the facility, and the monitoring of patient drug therapy.

Electronic Pharmacy Services (ePharmacy Services)

ePharmacy Services refers to all pharmaceutical services that registered ePharmacies are authorised to provide through the national electronic pharmacy platform. ePharmacy Services may also include other medical services related to the provision of pharmaceutical services. ePharmacy Services include but are not limited to:

i. Registration of Clients or Patients
ii Issuing, Administering and Validating Prescriptions
iii Sale and Delivery of Drugs
iv. Recording and Reporting of Pharmaceutical Interactions
v. Pharmaceutical Care
vi. Supporting Medical Services — such as diagnostic tests booking
vii Monitoring, Maintenance, and Control of Quality
viii Assuring and Reporting on Safety and Therapeutic Effectiveness of Drugs
ix. Follow-up and Evaluation of Usage of Drugs
x Dissemination of Information about Drugs - Consumer Education

Prescription

This is a written or electronic direction from a registered medical practitioner or other licensed health professionals, to a pharmacist to compound and or dispense a specific type and quantity of preparation or prefabricated drug to a patient/client. A scanned copy of the prescription is a valid prescription.

Electronic Prescribing (ePrescribing)

This is a service provision within the national ePharmacy platform that allows physicians and other medical practitioners to write and send prescriptions to an ePharmacy electronically instead of using handwritten or faxed notes or calling in prescriptions.

Electronic Prescription (ePrescription)

This is a valid prescription issued through the national ePharmacy platform from a registered health professional and a registered health facility. Written prescriptions may be converted to an ePrescription if the details the of prescription and a legible scanned copy is uploaded on to the national ePharmacy platform by a registered health professional (including a pharmacist) and a registered health facility, and for a patient or client registered on the national ePharmacy platform.

Quality Medicines/Drugs

Medicines or drugs that meet the specifications indicated by the manufacturer and the Food and Drugs Authority of Ghana.

ABBREVIATIONS

ePharmacy	- Electronic Pharmacies
ePharmacy Services	- Electronic Pharmacy Services
IT	- Information Technology
PC	- Pharmacy Council
PSGH	- Pharmaceutical Society of Ghana

RELATED OR REFERENCE POLICIES/GUIDELINES

The guidelines provided in this policy refer to existing legislation concerning pharmaceutical practice in Ghana. Hence, this policy shall be enacted in reference or in relation to the following policies:

i . Data Protection Act, 2012 (Act 843)
ii . Health Professions Regulatory Bodies Act, 2013, (ACT 857)
iii . Public Health Act 2012, (Act 851)

PROVISIONS OF THE POLICY

1 THE NATIONAL ELECTRONIC PHARMACY PLATFORM

To guarantee public safety whilst deploying electronic pharmacy services, a National Electronic Pharmacy Portal shall be appointed by the Pharmacy Council to serve as the nodal platform for transacting and monitoring electronic pharmacy services in Ghana.

The common electronic platform will ensure transparent medicine dispensing mechanisms and promote high accountability and responsibility. All pharmaceutical services transacted on the platform shall be tracked, recorded and stored.

All orders for ePharmacies shall be placed only through the national ePharmacy platform. Therefore, every ePharmacy must be registered, given access to and trained in using the national ePharmacy platform. ePharmacies may develop their online platforms.

However, these independent platforms must be legally and technically linked to the national ePharmacy platform to ensure a synchronous recording and storage of transactions. Independent platforms must be assessed and authorised for use for a given period by the Pharmacy Council.

2 REGISTERING ON THE NEPP

2.1 Conditions for Registration as An Electronic Pharmacy Service Provider

Electronic Pharmacy services shall be limited to only licensed retail pharmacies duly approved to undertake internet pharmacy or mail order by the Pharmacy Council. No person or entity is allowed to sell medicines online without obtaining registration for same.

Any person or entity who wishes to distribute, sell, stock, exhibit, or offer for sale drugs through an electronic medium shall obtain a registration certificate (which is valid for a period of twelve months) from the Pharmacy Council.

An application for an ePharmacy certificate or license shall be required with the provision of information in relation to the following:

i. Only registered retail pharmaceutical entities are eligible to apply;
ii. Mandatory registration with the Data Protection Agency and compliance with existing laws, including the Data Protection Act, 2012 (Act 843);
iii. The source(s) of the medicines to be supplied;
iv. The medicines must be registered for use in both the country of origin and the country of destination and use;
v. In situations where the medicine is not registrable in the country of origin, a certificate of the pharmaceutical product shall be submitted;
vi. Provisions in relation to the prescription and supply of medicines shall be duly complied with;
vii. The operator of an online or electronic pharmacy shall keep, in electronic format, all documentation on all transactions and shall make such documentation available for inspection; and
viii. ePharmacies shall have an obligation to provide periodic reports of ePharmacy transactions undertaken within a specified period as may be determined by the Pharmacy Council.

2.2 Registration of Users

All users (clients or patients) must register on the platform with a valid identification (e.g. the Ghana Card), and a unique identification number must be generated for the client, accessible by all institutions signed onto the ePharmacy platform.

All health professionals must also register on the platform with their registration numbers given to them by their respective regulatory bodies.

A client's medication history may be viewed from any registered health institution only with the permission of the client. The access granted by the client to any registered health facility must expire after a short period (e.g., 5 minutes) to prevent unauthorized access to confidential information.

2.3 Provision of Logo for Authentication of ePharmacies

The Pharmacy Council shall provide a common logo for regulating ePharmacies. This logo on an ePharmacy website, mobile application or the national ePharmacy platform ensures the safety of the medicines and authenticity of the website, application or platform. It further assures clients or patients on the expected quality of service to be experienced.

All ePharmacies in Ghana are required to display this logo.

2.4 Guidelines for EPS Accreditation Fees

Registration fees as determined by the Pharmacy Council for the provision of electronic pharmacy services are set at three levels intended to support the continued improvement in pharmaceutical care and to defray the costs involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the electronic pharmacy programmes.

The levels consist of processing, provider and platform subscription fees as follows;

1. All EPS applicants shall pay a non-refundable processing fee.
2. All accredited EPS providers shall pay an annual provider accreditation fee for a calendar year.
3. All Electronic Pharmacies shall pay an annual subscription fee to the Platform manager

The Governing Board of Pharmacy Council (PC) shall determine the fees, adjust the fees and set effective dates for such adjustments at any regular or special meeting of the Governing Board. The Governing Board also reserves the right to require that certain fees are paid in advance and/or are non-refundable in the event that an activity cannot be completed in accordance with the accreditation status.

2.5 Patient Rights and Responsibilities

2.5.1 Access to ePharmacy Services Rights

i Every Ghanaian or a person living in Ghana has a right to access NEPP services.

ii Minors can access NEPP services through their caregivers and guardians.

iii All users (clients or patients) can only register on the platform with a valid identification (e.g., Ghana Card), and a unique identification number would be generated for the client, accessible by all institutions signed onto the ePharmacy platform.

iv All health professionals, registering as a service provider, must also register on the platform with their registration numbers given to them by their respective regulatory bodies in Ghana.

v. Every registered user has the right to receive the appropriate care or prescribed NEPP services in a professional manner. The service delivery should be non-discriminatory.

vi. The cost of access to ePharmacy services is free of charge. Registered users or patients only pay for the cost (and delivery) of drugs, diagnostic tests ordered, and the pharmaceutical care provided through the NEPP.

vii. Every registered user of NEPP has the right to select ePharmacy providers, including pharmacists in an ePharmacy, and those who deliver their ePharmacy orders.

viii. Every registered user of NEPP has the right to speak to the pharmacist of an ePharmacy provider.

ix. Every registered user of NEPP has to be treated with courtesy and respect, in a non-discriminating manner, by each individual representing NEPP or an ePharmacy, and any other third parties including delivery agencies associated with NEPP or an ePharmacy.

x. Every registered user of NEPP has the right to receive assistance in the development, preparation, and periodic revision of their pharmaceutical care plan, as advised by the prescriber, and in a manner that is designed to best satisfy their current needs.

2.5 Patient Rights and Responsibilities

2.5.2 Communication and Information Rights

i. Rights and responsibilities of registered users should be easily accessible within the NEPP by all registered users.

II. Every registered user of NEPP has the right to be provided with adequate information from which they can give their informed consent for commencement of services, the continuation of services, the transfer of services to another ePharmacy or the termination of services.

III. Every registered user of NEPP has the right to express concerns and grievances or recommend modifications to their ePharmacy in regard to services or care, without fear of discrimination or reprisal.

IV. Every registered user of NEPP has the right to request and receive complete and up-to-date information (and data) relative to their pharmaceutical care plans, privately and with confidentiality.

V. Every registered user of NEPP has the right to be provided information as it relates to the uses and disclosure of their pharmaceutical care plan.

vi Every information related to the purchase of medicines and the pharmaceutical care provided to a registered user of NEPP must remain private and confidential, except as required and permitted by law.

vii. Every registered user of NEPP has the right to receive instructions on handling medicine recalls.

VIII Every registered user of NEPP has the right to be appropriately informed in advance of pharmaceutical care being provided and of the charges, including payment for care/services expected from third parties, and any charges for which the registered user/client/patient will be responsible.

ix Every registered user of NEPP has the right to receive information about the scope of services that an ePharmacy on NEPP will provide and specific limitations on those services.

x Every registered user of NEPP has the right to the assurance of confidentiality and privacy of all their information contained in NEPP.

XI. Every registered user of NEPP has the right to opt for the pharmacist of an ePharmacy to monitor their medicine therapy or pharmaceutical care plan. Adequate information should be made available to the registered user to make the choice related to this right.

xii. Every registered user of NEPP has the right to expect that an ePharmacy will supply them with quality drugs as prescribed, or for the conditions as indicated.

2.5 Patient Rights and Responsibilities

2.5.3 Responsibilities

Registered users and patients have a responsibility to provide accurate and complete information regarding their past and present medical history, insurance information and contact information, and notify the ePharmacy and NEPP with any changes, including delivery address and payment information.

Registered users and patients have a responsibility to pay for services on time or at the time of service delivery.

iii Registered users and patients have a responsibility to participate in the development and updating of their pharmaceutical care plan.

iv Registered users and patients have a responsibility to communicate whether they clearly comprehend the pharmaceutical care plan and would comply with the plan.

v Registered users and patients must accept responsibility for their actions if they refuse the pharmaceutical care plan or do not comply with the plan.

vi In order to keep their records up-to-date and accurate, registered users and patients should inform the NEPP:

vii if they change their name, address, phone number or email address

viii if any information in their health records is wrong

ix if they do not want their personal health information shared in a particular way.

x Registered users and patients must inform their prescriber and the ePharmacy/NEPP of any potential side effects and/or complications of treatment given.

xi Registered users and patients must notify the NEPP when the medication supply is running low so that refills are delivered promptly.

2.5.4 Exiting NEPP Services

i . Every registered user of NEPP has the right to decline participation, revoke consent or disenroll from a NEPP service at any time, so far as all outstanding obligations are discharged.

ii .Pharmacy Council has the right to decline participation, revoke consent or disenroll a patient/registered user/potential user/client from any NEPP service at any time if the patient/registered user/potential user/client is found to have provided false information, misrepresented information and identity, or is in breach of any provision established to ensure the efficient running of NEPP and the good of other users of NEPP. The Pharmacy Council reserves the right to also inform the appropriate law enforcement agencies for further action.

PROVISIONS OF THE POLICY

3 ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTRONIC PHARMACIES

The provisions of the Pharmacy Council, Ghana for registered pharmacies shall apply to electronic pharmacies. Hence,

i All pharmacies must be in good standing with the Pharmacy Council to operate on the platform.
ii Each electronic pharmacy is required to have a designated pharmacist.

4 SCOPE OF OPERATIONS OF ELECTRONIC PHARMACIES

4.1 Prescription Administration and Management

4.1.1Classification of Drugs

There are three (3) classes of drugs, as defined by the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA).

i. Class A drugs — can only be issued by a medical practitioner or a midwife
ii. Class B drugs — can be issued on a prescription from a medical practitioner or by a pharmacist
iii .Class C drugs — can be requested by a client without a prescription

All drugs should have unique national identifiable codes.

4.1.2 Electronic Prescriptions

An electronic message becomes a legal and valid electronic prescription if the prescription is:

- created in an electronic form, either by direct electronic entry or scanned written prescription;
- signed with an electronic signature, or directly on the written prescription before scanning;
- sent via the NEPP Electronic Prescription Service and no other messaging system; and
- then transferred to the dispensing facility or pharmacy as an electronic communication.

Prescribers are able to issue the following via EPS:

- Regular and acute prescriptions
- repeat prescriptions (repeat prescribing)
- and repeatable prescriptions (repeat dispensing)

4.1 Prescription Administration and Management

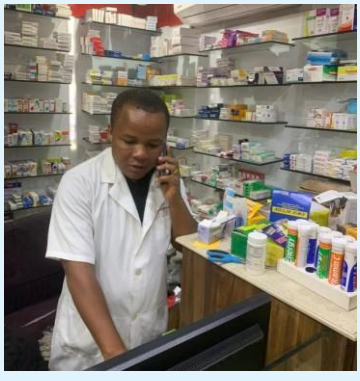
4.1.3 Receiving and Processing Prescriptions

Prescriptions issued through the NEPP shall have a unique identification number embodying an electronic record of all information that constitutes a valid prescription. In this respect, an electronic prescription template should be designed and accessible to prescribers to enable the direct transfer of prescriptions to pharmacies. Additional guidelines are outlined below.

i. A prescription must be assessed by a qualified pharmacist who is in good standing prior to dispensing.
ii. All prescriptions must be linked to the unique ID of the patient. The medication history of a patient may be viewed by a qualified practitioner with the permission of the client.
iii. The details of the patient, caregiver (where necessary), and the healthcare professional who served a prescription must be recorded.
iv. A valid prescription shall be required for requests for Class A and B drugs. Class C drugs may be requested without a prescription.
v. A valid prescription for a Class A or B drug must be submitted by a health facility, a qualified health professional, a patient, or a patient's caregiver.
vi. Limits shall be placed on the quantities of Class C drugs that can be supplied.
vii. It will not be possible for a prescriber to use the service to request a bulk prescription for a school or institution.
viii. Invalid prescriptions are out of scope.

4.1.4 Prohibition of Certain Drugs

ePharmacies are prohibited from selling or giving out psychotropic and narcotic substances/medicines covered under section 126 of the Public Health Act 2012, (Act 851).



4.2 Sale and Delivery

4.2.1 General Provisions

a. EPS providers shall only dispense medicines through accredited, licensed pharmacies and shall deliver medicines "safely and with appropriate instructions" in accordance with agreed standards.

b. ePharmacy service providers shall ensure that they deliver against every order and should not be discriminatory. It is mandatory to cater and deliver to the remote and rural areas of the country to increase the accessibility of medicines in general.

c. All ordered medicines may be delivered or requested as a pickup from a registered pharmacy or health facility depending on the client's needs.

d. Enroute of medicines to the client, periodic updates on the status on delivery should be provided to the client to enhance the assurance of the service provided by the ePharmacy provider.

e. Clients are required to inspect the delivery and confirm acceptance or rejection through the client version of the national ePharmacy platform. The ePharmacy providers should be automatically notified of status of the delivery upon confirmation or rejection by the client.

f. Clients have the right to reject a delivery if:

   i. the package of the delivery is unacceptable and compromises the contents of the package.

   ii. the package seems to have been tampered with or mishandled.

   iii. the drugs seem to have expired.

   iv. any other applicable reason as provided by the Pharmacy Council concerning the sale and distribution of drugs.

g. Pharmacies registered as ePharmacy providers may also register as courier service providers if they are able to provide such services.

h. Concerning medicines that are administered via injection, they may only be delivered to a registered healthcare facility, except for medicines that are classified as being self-administered (e.g., insulin injection).

4.2 Sale and Delivery

4.2.2 Conditions for Delivery of Medicines by Registered Mail/Courier

Medicine deliveries by electronic pharmacies shall be by licensed courier companies only. In situations where medicines are to be delivered to patients or caregivers directly through courier service or mail order, the Pharmacist shall ensure that;

i. The medicine is packaged in such a manner that it will guarantee the safety, quality and efficacy of medicines throughout the delivery process;
ii. A control system is implemented that will enable the pharmacist to detect and correct a delay in the delivery process;
iii. A report back system is introduced to ensure that problems with medicine distribution and delivery are detected timeously;
iv An electronic feedback confirming the delivery of the medicine(s);
v. A patient information leaflet is made available;
vi. Medicines that are prescribed for acute ailments or conditions (i.e. immediate need, not repeatable and non-chronic conditions) shall not be delivered to patients by mail/courier;
vii. Medicines that are registered to be stored in conditions under 8°C or below shall not be delivered to patients by mail order or courier unless cold chain management is ensured.
viii. Medicines prepared as injectable shall not be delivered by mail order or courier to patients or caregivers.

4.2.3 Measures to Tackle Counterfeit Medicines, Expired Products and Unauthorised

Each record of a transaction on the EPS should include:

i. Details of ePharmacy including name, address and signature/digital signature of registered pharmacist-in-charge, who is dispensing or supervising the dispensing of the medicines;
ii Serial number and date of the transaction;
iii. Details of the medicine include name, quantity, batch number, expiry date, manufacturer name.

4.3 Refill

Prescriptions that span long periods (more than one month) shall be served in a staggered manner, with a limited quantity being served initially and subsequent supplies provided periodically as refills. The prescriber will have the ability to set the refill times. This shall not exceed 3 months' quantity for any medicine.

Patients shall be notified at least one week to the date the previous stock is expected to run out to request for a refill.

A refill notification shall be sent to the pharmacy which supplied the previous stock to indicate whether they can provide a refill or not. The pharmacy will be given 24 hours to respond to the notification.

4.4 Pharmaceutical Care

i Mandatory counselling shall be provided for all medicines purchased through an online pharmacy or ePharmacy, regardless of delivery method. Counselling must be done via phone call to the patient when the patient receives the medications.

ii. . Counselling is to be done by the designated pharmacist of the pharmacy that dispenses the medication. The responsibility of counselling is on the pharmacy, under the supervision of the designated pharmacist.

iii . Every counselling session must be authenticated (signed off) by the pharmacist and records kept appropriately.

iv Medicine labels should be printed, not hand-written, and shall include sufficient details of the facility: the name, location, contact, and email address of the pharmacy.

v. The national ePharmacy platform must incorporate a means for patients to report adverse drug reactions to the Food and Drugs Authority.

vi. EPS provider may provide e-counselling services, resources permitting.

4.5 Monitoring and Control

i. Every prescription received on the ePharmacy portal should be verified by a registered pharmacist on behalf of the ePharmacy and details of the patient/client, registered medical practitioner, and registered health facility, shall be checked.

ii. All ePharmacies shall, through the national ePharmacy platform, be required to maintain and update information regarding the availability of medicines, types of medicines offered for sale, supply channels or vendor lists, details of registered pharmacists, registered medical practitioners etc.

iii. . Monitoring of both the platform and pharmacies shall be done by the Pharmacy Council.

!V. Consumers must be provided with the means to rate/review pharmacies or service providers. Both medicines (products) and counselling shall be reviewed. The NEPP shall have an inherent system for evaluating all transactions and registered users.

v. The premises from where ePharmacy business is conducted shall be inspected, periodically (at least every six months), by the Pharmacy Council.

vi. EPS providers may be required to partner with the Food and Drugs Authority to recall medicines, raise awareness on medicines abuse and misuse, and also compile adverse events of medicines for the Food and Drugs Authority.

4.6 Security of Patient/Client/Health Facility Data

i. ePharmacies shall keep all customer information confidential including prescription related information and adhere to applicable information technology and data protection laws in Ghana (including Data Protection Act, 2012 (Act 843).

ii. The disclosure of information gathered through the online platforms by an ePharmacy or through the national ePharmacy platform is prohibited. It does not make any exceptions for such data to be shared internally for improving the functionality of platforms. Data can only be disclosed only by the permission of the Pharmacy Council for a specified and verified purpose.

iii. All ePharmacies operating in Ghana shall be registered in Ghana and the data generated by them be stored and processed locally and is subject to the data protection laws of Ghana (including Data Protection Act, 2012 (Act 843).

iv. ePharmacies must not share critical information with drug manufacturers who may be based abroad without the permission of the Pharmacy Council.

V. The Pharmacy Council will provide guidelines on how other health professions can access data hosted on the national ePharmacy platform and other platforms managed by registered ePharmacies.

4.7 Consumer Education

i. Drug information should be harmonised across all websites/platforms. To achieve this standardisation, a single database of all drugs registered in Ghana containing all relevant drug information should be made available and accessible to ePharmacy providers through the national ePharmacy platform, in consultation with the Food and Drugs Authority.

ii . Multiple communication platforms, especially online, shall be used by the Pharmacy Council and ePharmacy providers to educate consumers.

iii . The national ePharmacy platform shall provide reports and analytics on activities and patterns of drug purchases to the ePharmacy service providers, clients, government agencies, civil society, educational institutions and others as permitted by the Pharmacy Council and applicable laws.

4.8 Closure or Revoking of Registration

4.8.1 Conditions for Closure or Revoking of Registration

The license or permission to operate an ePharmacy may be withdrawn or revoked by the Pharmacy Council, when a pharmacy is found to be in breach of any of the conditions required to register as an ePharmacy. These may include but are not limited to:

i. Non-renewal of membership or registration fees after being served with two cautions or reminders or spanning beyond a month of the renewal date.
ii. The absence of a designated pharmacist for the ePharmacy.
iii. Poor service delivery as determined by the Pharmacy Council.
iv. Loss of license as a [traditional] pharmacy.
v. Sale and delivery of narcotics and psychotropic substances and their precursors on the electronic pharmacy platform as indicated in section 4.1.4 supra.
vi. Obstruction of a person authorized by the Pharmacy Council from exercising lawful authority.
vii. Failure to report as provided for under section 2.1 (vii).

4.8.1 Conditions for Reinstatement of EPS after Closure

An ePharmacy would be reinstated after satisfying all conditions of becoming a registered ePharmacy and completing a probationary period of close assessment and supervision by the Pharmacy Council for two months.

The cost of the probationary assessment shall be determined by the Pharmacy Council and borne by the ePharmacy applicant.

PROVISIONS OF THE POLICY

5 OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF THE EPP

5.1 EPS Advisory Committee

There shall be established an EPS Advisory Committee charged with the following responsibility:

1. Develop, review and recommend standards for electronic pharmacy services in Ghana.
2. Recommend for accreditation relevant pharmaceutical entities, agencies and firms.
3. Facilitate the regular training of all stakeholders. This shall include provision of standards of training and certification etc.
4. Advise and assist in the management of all electronic pharmacy activities in Ghana.

5.2 Membership

Membership of the Advisory Committee shall be determined by the PC. It may consist of pharmacists and other persons who may not be pharmacists but have the requisite competencies and experiences to help the Committee achieve the mandate outlined in section 5.1 supra.

5.3 Meetings of EPS Advisory Committee

The EPS Advisory Committee shall have a minimum of six meetings every year. These meetings shall be scheduled within the months of January, March, May, July, September and November every year.

5.4 Term of Office

The tenure of office of the Advisory Committee members shall be four years and Eligible to be reappointed for another term only, except the ex-officio members (Head of MIS/PI and the IT staff).

PROVISIONS OF THE POLICY

6 SERVICE OF THE POLICY

6.1 Dissemination

This policy should be readily accessible to pharmacies, pharmacists, other health professions, civil society and the general public. Multiple communication methods will be employed to widely disseminate policies and guidelines, namely:

- Educational Seminars
- Print via Pharmacy Council
- Electronic via Pharmacy Council website

6.2 Policy Implementation, Administration and Maintenance

a. The provisions in this policy as presently set forth may be amended from time to time, as determined by the Pharmacy Council.

b. The provisions of this policy are binding on every registered ePharmacy and potential user of NEPP.

c. The Pharmacy Council is responsible for the enforcement, implementation, administration and management of the policy.

d. The Pharmacy Council would develop supporting guidelines and other relevant documents to facilitate the execution of this policy. The absence of these other documents shall not in any way nullify the applicability or enforceability of this policy in its current state or as may be amended from time to time.

   i. Software specification requirements (SSR) for the National ePharmacy Platform
   ii. Handbook for National ePharmacy Platform
   iii. Monitoring & Evaluation Guidelines
   iV. User Standard Operating Procedures
   v. Data analytics and Report Guidelines

e. These guidelines shall take effect immediately upon adoption by the Pharmacy Council.

f. Any amendment shall be effected in a similar manner.

ABOUT THE COUNCIL

THE PHARMACY COUNCIL, GHANA

The Pharmacy Council is established by Parts IV & VI of the Health Professions Regulatory Bodies Act, 2013, (ACT 857) as a body corporate with perpetual succession. It is governed by a nine (9) member Governing Board with the mandate of securing in the public interest the highest standards in the practice of pharmacy in the country.

OUR VISION

To guarantee the highest levels of pharmaceutical care.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Pharmacy Council is to secure the highest level of pharmaceutical care by ensuring competent pharmaceutical care providers who practice with agreed standards and are accessible to the whole population. In addition we shall collaborate with related local agencies and international pharmaceutical organisations to enhance our effectiveness and our contribution on rational drug use in the nation. This mission shall be carried out with dedication, integrity and professionalism.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

The functions of the Council are to:

1. Ensure that the education and training of pharmacists and any other pharmaceutical support staff are carried out at approved educational institutions for efficient pharmacy practice;
2. Set standards for continuous professional development for practitioners and pharmaceutical support staff;
3. Register practitioners;
4. Ensure the equitable and accessible distribution of pharmaceutical premises;
5. Monitor and inspect pharmacy practices where pharmaceutical care is provided;
6. Set and ensure standards for pharmacy practice and professional conduct;
7. Provide guidelines for the education, training, registration, licensing and the practice of all pharmaceutical support staff;
8. Exercise disciplinary powers over pharmacists and any other pharmaceutical support staff;
9. Ensure accreditation for pharmacy programmes in collaboration with appropriate state agencies;
10. Develop a management and administrative structure and systems to provide and efficient mechanism to regulate pharmacy practice;
11. Advice the minister on pharmacy practice and related matters; and
12. Perform any other function that is ancillary to the object of the Council.