

DISPENSING DOCTORS

A practitioner took over a practice from a colleague and decided that he would be dispensing medicines to his patients from that practice. He needed information on how to obtain a dispensing licence. Therefore, we wish to advise as follows:-

To obtain a dispensing licence from the Department of Health, a practitioner should first complete a dispensing course from an accredited body. The Foundation for Professional Development offers a long distance course and can be contacted on 012-816 9000 for further information. Once the course is completed, a 1)copy of the Certificate together with the 2)completed Application Form and 3)a cheque in the amount of R1 000 should be forwarded to the Department of Health (contact details are on the application form).

It takes between 6 and 12 weeks to process an application form after which the practitioner would be in possession of the dispensing licence. A dispensing licence is valid for a period of 5 years from issue and renewal for the licence should be applied for from the Department 3 months prior to the expiry date. A dispensing licence is linked to an individual as well as the premises. Therefore, if a practitioner relocates prior to the expiry date of the dispensing licence and the practitioner at the new premises also had a dispensing licence, the first practitioner may forward a letter to the Department of Health, informing them of the change of address. However, if there had not been a dispensing practitioner at the new premises, the practitioner need to apply for a new licence for the new premises (no need to repeat the dispensing course). Fees applicable when applying for a licence:-

The following application fees which include Value Added Tax (VAT) shall be payable to the Director-General:

- (a) A fee to accompany the application form: R1000-00.
- (b) A fee to accompany subsequent applications in respect of additional premises where compounding and dispensing of medicines will be carried out or relocation application: R250-00
- (c) A fee to accompany the renewal application form, even in respect of more than one premises: R500-00
- (d) A licence fee for the three year period payable either in full in advance or annually within 90 days from the date of issuing the licence: R600-00 or R200 annually.

The appropriate dispensing fee as contemplated in Section 22G of the Medicines & Related Substances Act to be charged by persons licensed in terms of Section 22(1)a) of the Act must be calculated, exclusive of VAT, as follows:-

“(1) Where the Single Exit Price of a medicine or Scheduled substance is less than or equal to seventy eight rands, the dispensing fee must not exceed 30% of the Single Exit Price in respect of that medicine or Scheduled substance.

(2) Where the Single Exit Price of a medicine or Scheduled substance is greater than seventy eight rands, the dispensing fee must not exceed twenty three rands and four cents of the Single Exit Price in respect of that medicine or Scheduled substance.

(3) The provisions of this regulation may be reviewed annually by the Minister with regard to CPI, the PPI and the need to ensure the availability, affordability of quality medicines and scheduled substances in the Republic.”

[Reg. 12 substituted by GN R524/2009, amended by GN R657/2009, and substituted by GN R1256/2010]]