

Electronic script misconceptions

EMGuidance Scripts

EMGuidance Scripts are prepared using an electronic agent and are signed by prescribers using their advanced electronic signature which means they meet the legislative requirements of electronic prescribing. Furthermore, the immutable tracking history displayed as an audit log on the email body and pharmacy portal supports the pharmacist's decision making on script validity.

Misconception - A digital script is not the original prescription

EMGuidance Scripts are prepared using an “electronic agent” and signed using an “advanced electronic signature” (AES) as defined by the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, 2002 and therefore meet the legislative requirements of electronic prescribing as stipulated in Regulation 33 of the Medicines and Related Substances Act 101 of 1965. **The AES signed PDF is deemed as the original script.** An electronic script prepared using an electronic agent and signed using AES cannot be rejected on the basis that it is not the original script.

Misconception - Schedule 6 scripts cannot be sent electronically

If the schedule 6 script is prepared using an electronic agent and signed using an advanced electronic signature, as an EMGuidance Script is, then it meets the legislative requirements of electronic prescribing.

Misconception - Scripts must come from the doctor's practice

EMGuidance Scripts are prepared using an electronic agent and signed using an advanced electronic signature therefore do not need to be sent directly from the doctor's practice.

This misconception stems from communication shared by the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa (PSSA) in the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic. The communication stipulated that prescriptions that had been signed and scanned could be accepted for schedule 5 and 6 medicines if they had been emailed or faxed directly from the prescriber's rooms. This aimed to facilitate access to medicine during the pandemic when fully legally compliant prescription platforms (electronic agents using AES) were not widely available.