



### Chapter 13 Prescribing and administering medication

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#### Conflicts of interests in prescribing matters (pages 554-57)

In October 2013, the BMA, Pharmacy Voice and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee issued a joint statement on 'Prescription Direction' – where a patient is directed to a specific pharmacy by a GP practice to have their medicines dispensed. Providing advice that could be seen to constitute prescription direction is against best practice. The statement highlights the type of activities which practices and pharmacies should avoid and emphasises the importance of transparency in financial arrangements. It is available to view or download from the BMA website: <http://bma.org.uk/practical-support-at-work/gp-practices/prescribing/prescription-direction>.

#### General Medical Council guidance: Good practice in prescribing and managing medical devices

In February 2013, updated guidance on prescribing and managing medical devices from the General Medical Council (GMC) came into effect. The previous guidance, published in 2008, is referenced throughout chapter 13 of *Medical Ethics Today* (MET) and readers are advised to refer to the updated version of guidance at the relevant points in the chapter.

Key changes to the guidance and page numbers for MET are given below where applicable.

- a restriction on prescribing unlicensed medicines (encompassing both off-label drugs and drugs without a marketing authorisation) in preference to available licensed alternatives to cases where it is necessary to meet the medical needs of an individual patient (pages 536-537)
- stricter guidance on self-prescribing and prescribing for people with whom doctors have a close personal relationship (page 567)
- a section on sports medicine prohibiting doctors from prescribing or colluding in the provision of medicines or treatment with the intention of improperly enhancing an individual's performance.

The guidance is available on the GMC website at: [http://www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/ethical\\_guidance/14316.asp](http://www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/ethical_guidance/14316.asp) (accessed 9 April 2013).