



# RULE-MAKING ORDER EMERGENCY RULE ONLY

## CR-103E (December 2017) (Implements RCW 34.05.350 and 34.05.360)

CODE REVISER USE ONLY

OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER  
STATE OF WASHINGTON  
FILED

DATE: October 25, 2024

TIME: 9:18 AM

WSR 24-22-013

**Agency:** Department of Health and Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission

**Effective date of rule:**

**Emergency Rules**

- Immediately upon filing.
- Later (specify)

**Any other findings required by other provisions of law as precondition to adoption or effectiveness of rule?**

- Yes  No If Yes, explain:

**Purpose:** Medication assistance in community-based and in-home care settings. As provided in RCW 69.41.010 (15) the Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission (commission) and Department of Health (department) are filing jointly to reinstate medication assistance rules as permitted under chapter 69.41 RCW by adopting new rules in WAC 246-945-710, 246-945-712, 246-945-714, 246-945-716, 246-945-718, 246-945-720, 246-945-722, 246-945-724, 246-945-726, and 246-945-728.

This adopted emergency rule will extend WSR 24-14-078 filed on June 28, 2024, without change.

This rule establishes criteria for medication assistance in community-based and in-home care settings in accordance with chapter 69.41 RCW. The definition for medication assistance provided in RCW 69.41.010(15) states:

"Medication assistance" means assistance rendered by a nonpractitioner to an individual residing in a community-based care setting or in-home care setting to facilitate the individual's self-administration of a legend drug or controlled substance. It includes reminding or coaching the individual, handing the medication container to the individual, opening the individual's medication container, using an enabler, or placing the medication in the individual's hand, and such other means of medication assistance as defined by rule adopted by the department.

These emergency rules provide further definitions for terms used within this definition such as "enabler" and establish those "other means of medication assistance as defined by rule adopted by the department." These rules help impacted individuals retain their independence and live in the least restrictive setting, such as their own home, longer by providing means and guidance for medication assistance.

**Citation of rules affected by this order:**

New: WAC 246-945-710, 246-945-712, 246-945-714, 246-945-716, 246-945-718, 246-945-720, 246-945-722, 246-945-724, 246-945-726 and 246-945-728

Repealed: None

Amended: None

Suspended: None

**Statutory authority for adoption:** RCW 18.64.005, 69.41.010(15), and 69.41.075

**Other authority:**

**EMERGENCY RULE**

Under RCW 34.05.350 the agency for good cause finds:

- That immediate adoption, amendment, or repeal of a rule is necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety, or general welfare, and that observing the time requirements of notice and opportunity to comment upon adoption of a permanent rule would be contrary to the public interest.
- That state or federal law or federal rule or a federal deadline for state receipt of federal funds requires immediate adoption of a rule.

**Reasons for this finding:** The commission's new chapter, chapter 246-945 WAC, became effective in July 2020. The old rules, including the former rules on medication assistance (chapter 246-888 WAC), were repealed in March 2021. The commission's repeal of chapter 246-888 WAC has resulted in unintended disruptions for medication assistance in the community-based and in-home care settings permitted under chapter 69.41 RCW. Emergency rulemaking is necessary to immediately restore medication assistance regulations to preserve patient safety and welfare while the commission and the department work on permanent rules. The CR-101 was filed on December 27, 2021, under WSR 22-02-015. Permanent

rulemaking was originally delayed due to the novel coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic but is still in progress. Commission staff collaborated with the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) in the rule language drafting process. At the May 2, 2024, business meeting the rule language was approved by the commission and staff were authorized to file a CR-102. The CR-102 for the permanent rulemaking project has been drafted and is under review.

**Note: If any category is left blank, it will be calculated as zero.  
No descriptive text.**

**Count by whole WAC sections only, from the WAC number through the history note.  
A section may be counted in more than one category.**

**The number of sections adopted in order to comply with:**

Federal statute:	New	0	Amended	0	Repealed	0
Federal rules or standards:	New	0	Amended	0	Repealed	0
Recently enacted state statutes:	New	0	Amended	0	Repealed	0

**The number of sections adopted at the request of a nongovernmental entity:**

New	0	Amended	0	Repealed	0
-----	---	---------	---	----------	---

**The number of sections adopted on the agency's own initiative:**



New	10	Amended	0	Repealed	0
-----	----	---------	---	----------	---

**The number of sections adopted in order to clarify, streamline, or reform agency procedures:**

New	0	Amended	0	Repealed	0
-----	---	---------	---	----------	---

**The number of sections adopted using:**

Negotiated rule making:	New	0	Amended	0	Repealed	0
Pilot rule making:	New	0	Amended	0	Repealed	0
Other alternative rule making:	New	10	Amended	0	Repealed	0

<b>Date Adopted:</b> October 25, 2024	<b>Signature:</b>  
<b>Name:</b> Hawkins DeFrance, PharmD   Kristin Peterson, JD for Umair A. Shah MD, MPH	
<b>Title:</b> Pharmacy Quality Assurance Commission Chair   Chief of Policy for Secretary of Health	

**PART 5 - MEDICATION ASSISTANCE**

NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-945-710 Scope and applicability.** (1) This section through WAC 246-945-728 only apply to medication assistance provided in community-based care settings and in-home care settings.

(2) The following definitions apply to this section through WAC 246-945-728 unless the context requires otherwise:

- (a) "Medication" means legend drugs and controlled substances; and
- (b) "Practitioner" has the same meaning as in RCW 69.41.010(17).

NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-945-712 Self-administration with assistance, independent self-administration, and medication administration.** (1) Self-administration with assistance means assistance with legend drugs and controlled substances rendered by a nonpractitioner to an individual residing in a community-based care setting or an in-home care setting. It includes reminding or coaching the individual to take their medication, handing the medication container to the individual, opening the medication container, using an enabler, or placing the medication in the hand of the individual/resident. The individual/resident must be able to put the medication into their mouth or apply or instill the medication. The individual/resident does not necessarily need to state the name of the medication, intended effects, side effects, or other details, but must be aware that they are receiving medication. Assistance may be provided by a nonpractitioner with prefilled insulin syringes. Assistance is limited to handing the prefilled insulin syringe to an individual/resident. Assistance with the administration of any other intravenous or injectable medication is specifically excluded. The individual/resident retains the right to refuse medication. Self-administration with assistance shall occur immediately prior to the ingestion or application of a medication.

(2) Independent self-administration occurs when an individual/resident is independently able to directly apply a legend drug or controlled substance by ingestion, inhalation, injection or other means. In licensed assisted living facilities, self-administration may include situations in which an individual cannot physically self-administer medications but can accurately direct others. These regulations do not limit the rights of people with functional disabilities to self-direct care according to chapter 74.39 RCW.

(3) If an individual/resident is not able to physically ingest or apply a medication independently or with assistance, then the medication must be administered to the individual/resident by a person legally authorized to do so (e.g., physician, nurse, pharmacist). All

laws and regulations applicable to medication administration apply. If an individual/resident cannot safely self-administer medication or self-administer with assistance or cannot indicate an awareness that they are taking a medication, then the medication must be administered to the individual/resident by a person legally authorized to do so.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-945-714 Self-administration with assistance in a community-based care setting or an in-home setting.** (1) An individual/resident, or their representative, in a community-based care setting or an in-home setting may request self-administration with assistance.

(2) No additional separate assessment or documentation of the needs of the individual/resident are required in order to initiate self-administration with assistance. It is recommended that providers document their decision-making process in the health record of the individual or resident health record.

(3) A nonpractitioner may help in the preparation of legend drugs and controlled substances for self-administration where a practitioner has determined and communicated orally or by written direction that such medication preparation assistance is necessary and appropriate.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-945-716 Enabler.** (1) Enablers are physical devices used to facilitate an individual's/resident's self-administration of a medication. Physical devices include, but are not limited to, a medicine cup, glass, cup, spoon, bowl, prefilled syringes, syringes used to measure liquids, specially adapted table surface, straw, piece of cloth, or fabric.

(2) An individual's hand may also be an enabler. The practice of "hand-over-hand" administration is not allowed. Medication administration with assistance includes steadying or guiding an individual's hand while he or she applies or instills medications such as ointments, eye, ear, and nasal preparations.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-945-718 Alteration of medication for self-administration with assistance.** Alteration of a medication for self-administration with assistance includes, but is not limited to, crushing tablets, cutting tablets in half, opening capsules, mixing powdered medications with foods or liquids, or mixing tablets or capsules with foods or liquids. Individuals/residents must be aware that the medication is being altered or added to their food.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-945-720 Medication alteration.** A practitioner practicing within their scope of practice must determine that it is safe to alter a legend drug or controlled substance. If the medication is altered, and a practitioner has determined that such medication alteration is necessary and appropriate, the determination shall be communicated orally or by written direction. Documentation of the appropriateness of the alteration must be on the prescription container, or in the individual's/resident's record.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-945-722 Types of assistance provided by nonpractitioner.** A nonpractitioner can transfer a medication from one container to another for the purpose of an individual dose. Examples include: Pouring a liquid medication from the medication container to a calibrated spoon or medication cup.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-945-724 Oxygen order/prescription requirements.** Under state law, oxygen is not a medication and is not covered under this rule. While oxygen is not considered a medication under state law, oxygen does require an order/prescription from a practitioner.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-945-726 Self-administration with assistance of medication through a gastrostomy or "g-tube."** If a prescription is written as an oral medication via "g-tube," and if a practitioner has determined that the medication can be altered, if necessary, for use via "g-tube," the rules as outlined for self-administration with assistance would also apply.

NEW SECTION

**WAC 246-945-728 Other medication assistance requirements.** A practitioner, nonpractitioner, and an individual/resident or their representative should be familiar with the rules specifically regulating the residential setting. The department of social and health services has adopted rules relating to medication services in assisted living facilities and adult family homes.