

Working with medicines

# First aid providers on ships and vessels

## Regulations

First aid providers on ships and vessels, have various authorities under the Medicines and Poisons Regulations 2016 to purchase, hold and use prescription medicines.

## Authorised persons

Authorised persons include the captain or the person charged with the provision of acute treatment to persons or animals on vessels including:

* Domestic commercial vessels;
* Foreign vessels;
* Racing yachts;
* Regulated Australian vessels; and
* Regulated Australian vessels carrying livestock.

## Authority

The following table outlines the authority of first aid providers on vessels to use medicines under the Regulations:

| **Practitioner** | **Type of Authority** |
| --- | --- |
| **Obtain (purchase)** | **Possess** | **Administer** | **Supply** | **Prescribe** |
| First Aid Provider | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 |  |  |

Authority is limited to the lawful practice for the first aid provider and includes:

* for use aboard the vessel only.

## Purchasing medicines

First aid providers for vessels may purchase medicines on behalf of the vessel or captain of the vessel.

Schedule 4 (S4) or Schedule 8 (S8) medicines may be purchased from an appropriate licensed pharmaceutical wholesaler or in retail quantities from a registered pharmacy. The purchaser must provide the supplier with written requisitions, in accordance with regulations.

Supplying pharmacies and wholesalers are expected to sight evidence of the bona fides of any person requisitioning the supply of medicines as a first aid provider aboard a vessel.

## Supply and prescription

First aid providers may administer a S4 or S8 medicine in accordance with their authority, in the treatment of patients aboard the vessel.

## Storage

S4 medicines and S8 medicines must be stored aboard the vessel, according to relevant maritime law governing the vessel.

## Recording

First aid providers must make accurate clinical records of all medicines administered or used aboard the vessel.

## Compliance assessment

The supply of medicines to vessels may be subject to routine audit assessments to monitor compliance with these requirements. Non-compliance with the Regulations may result in regulatory actions such as restrictions or loss of medicines authorities, and/or prosecution under the legislation.

## More information

For more information contact the Medicines and Poisons Regulation Branch on:

* (08) 9222 6883 (Monday – Friday, 8.30am – 4.30pm)
* poisons@health.wa.gov.au