RCW 69.50.308  Prescriptions.  (a) A controlled substance may be dispensed only as provided in this section. Prescriptions electronically communicated must also meet the requirements under RCW 69.50.312.

(b) Except when dispensed directly by a practitioner authorized to prescribe or administer a controlled substance, other than a pharmacy, to an ultimate user, a substance included in Schedule II may not be dispensed without the written or electronically communicated prescription of a practitioner.

(i) Schedule II narcotic substances may be dispensed by a pharmacy pursuant to a facsimile prescription under the following circumstances:

(ii) The facsimile prescription is transmitted by a practitioner to the pharmacy; and

(iii) The facsimile prescription is for a patient in a long-term care facility or a hospice program; and

(iv) The practitioner or the practitioner's agent notes on the facsimile prescription that the patient is a long-term care or hospice patient.

(2) Injectable Schedule II narcotic substances that are to be compounded for patient use may be dispensed by a pharmacy pursuant to a facsimile prescription if the facsimile prescription is transmitted by a practitioner to the pharmacy.

(3) Under (1) and (2) of this subsection the facsimile prescription shall serve as the original prescription and shall be maintained as other Schedule II narcotic substances prescriptions.

(c) In emergency situations, as defined by rule of the commission, a substance included in Schedule II may be dispensed upon oral prescription of a practitioner, reduced promptly to writing and filed by the pharmacy. Prescriptions shall be retained in conformity with the requirements of RCW 69.50.306.

(d) A prescription for a substance included in Schedule II may not be refilled. A prescription for a substance included in Schedule II may not be filled more than six months after the date the prescription was issued.

(e) Except when dispensed directly by a practitioner authorized to prescribe or administer a controlled substance, other than a pharmacy, to an ultimate user, a substance included in Schedule III, IV, or V, which is a prescription drug as determined under RCW 69.04.560, may not be dispensed without a written, oral, or electronically communicated prescription of a practitioner. Any oral prescription must be promptly reduced to writing.

(f) A written, oral, or electronically communicated prescription for a substance included in Schedule III, IV, or V, which is a prescription drug as determined under RCW 69.04.560, for a resident in a long-term care facility or hospice program may be communicated to the pharmacy by an authorized agent of the prescriber. A registered nurse, pharmacist, or physician practicing in a long-term care facility or hospice program may act as the practitioner's agent for purposes of this section, without need for a written agency agreement.

(g) The prescription for a substance included in Schedule III, IV, or V may not be filled or refilled more than six months after the date issued by the practitioner or be refilled more than five times, unless renewed by the practitioner.

(h) A valid prescription or lawful order of a practitioner, in order to be effective in legalizing the possession of controlled substances, must be issued in good faith for a legitimate medical use.
purpose by one authorized to prescribe the use of such controlled substance. An order purporting to be a prescription not in the course of professional treatment is not a valid prescription or lawful order of a practitioner within the meaning and intent of this chapter; and the person who knows or should know that the person is filling such an order, as well as the person issuing it, can be charged with a violation of this chapter.

(i) A substance included in Schedule V must be distributed or dispensed only for a medical purpose.

(j) A practitioner may dispense or deliver a controlled substance to or for an individual or animal only for medical treatment or authorized research in the ordinary course of that practitioner's profession. Medical treatment includes dispensing or administering a narcotic drug for pain, including intractable pain.

(k) No administrative sanction, or civil or criminal liability, authorized or created by this chapter may be imposed on a pharmacist for action taken in reliance on a reasonable belief that an order purporting to be a prescription was issued by a practitioner in the usual course of professional treatment or in authorized research.

(l) An individual practitioner may not dispense a substance included in Schedule II, III, or IV for that individual practitioner's personal use.

(4) [((m))] For the purposes of this section, the terms "long-term care facility" and "hospice program" have the meaning[s] provided in RCW 18.64.011. [2016 c 148 § 8; 2013 c 276 § 3; 2013 c 19 § 103; 2012 c 10 § 46; 2001 c 248 § 1; 1993 c 187 § 19; 1971 ex.s. c 308 § 69.50.308.]

Reviser's note: This section was amended by 2013 c 19 § 103 and by 2013 c 276 § 3, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

Application—2012 c 10: See note following RCW 18.20.010.