



College of Pharmacists  
of British Columbia

## Patient Keyword

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### Overview:

All patients should be informed of the option of having a keyword attached to their patient record. The keyword limits access of the patients' records to only those pharmacies and physicians to whom the patient has given the keyword.

The use of a keyword may delay pharmacy services if the patient forgets the keyword or is unable to provide it. However, use of the keyword will not compromise patient care if a patient is admitted to an emergency department unconscious, as the emergency room physician can have the patient's keyword reset if necessary.

After the keyword is set, the keyword must be provided when:

- Accessing a patient medication history
- Performing a Drug Use Evaluation (DUE)
- Dispensing or refilling a prescription
- Requesting a patient profile mailing
- Requesting any information about patient prescriptions (e.g. Number of refills remaining, allergies recorded etc.)
- A patient's physician must provide the keyword when calling the pharmacist for information contained on a patient medication history.

### Selecting a Keyword:

The patient must choose his or her own keyword; a pharmacist cannot choose a keyword for a patient. A keyword can contain a maximum of eight characters and can be made up of alphabetic letters (e.g. ABCD), numbers (eg. 1234) or a combination of both letters and numbers (eg. ABCD1234).

Use of a "mother's maiden name" for a keyword is not recommended, as this information can often be discovered through different sources. The keyword may only be stored on the local computer system with the patient's consent.

### Adding a Keyword:

1. View [positive identification](#) (see below)
2. Use the Patient Keyword Maintenance feature on your local software to assign the new keyword  
**Note:** If you are not familiar with adding a keyword, check with your local software provider for details on this feature



### Changing a Keyword:

1. View [positive identification](#)
  2. Ask the patient for the old keyword and the new keyword
  3. Use the Patient Keyword Maintenance feature on your local software to assign the new keyword
- Note:** A keyword may only be changed once in any 24-hour period

### Removing a Keyword:

1. View [positive identification](#)
  2. Call the PharmaNet Help Desk citing the identification provided and request the keyword be deleted
- Note:** The Help Desk can only delete a keyword; they cannot change it or add a new one.

### Positive identification is:

- Viewing one piece of primary identification, for example:
  - Drivers License
  - Passport
  - Provincial Identity card issued by the Province of BC
  - Police Identity Card issued by RCMP or Municipality
  - Certificate of Indian Status Card
- OR Viewing two pieces of secondary identification, for example:
  - Care card issued by the Province of B.C.
  - Birth Certificate
  - Canadian Citizenship Card
  - Landed Immigrant Status papers
  - Naturalization Certificate
  - Marriage certificate
  - Change of Name Certificate
  - Identification or Discharge Certificate from External Affairs Canada or Canadian Armed Forces
  - Consular Identity Card
- OR Knowing the patient personally for two or more years