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Unauthorized Prescriptions

A pharmacy called regarding our employee's phoning in prescriptions for herself using my DEA number. What should I do?

This is an unfortunate but frequently asked question. First examine your records and determine if possible the extent of the problem. Examine any emergency supplies and samples to determine if diversion has occurred within your practice as well. If you discover controlled substance diversion you should consider notifying the DEA. This is especially important if the substances were possibly sold to others.

Your human resource policy should address use of drugs and alcohol by employees. Human Resource Policy for your practice which provides for random and for cause drug screens of employees will be of value in these situations. The employee under investigation should be taken out of clinical care until the investigation is resolved. Disciplinary measures are your decision. However, reporting of the offense to the licensing board responsible for the professional license of the individual may be required. You may also consider counseling the employee and offering assistance obtaining a rehabilitation program. Finally, you should consider seeking advice from a licensed attorney to resolve any legal issues associated with your responsibilities and liabilities as an employer in this situation.

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