

New York's stringent paperless-prescribing law takes effect

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New York is putting an end to most paper prescriptions for medicine as the nation's toughest electronic-prescribing law takes effect.

As of Sunday, doctors, dentists and other [health care professionals](#) must electronically send prescriptions directly to pharmacies, instead of giving paper scripts to patients. There are exceptions for emergencies and unusual circumstances, and thousands of prescribers have gotten extensions.

The [law](#) aims to fight painkiller abuse by thwarting prescription-slip forgery, while reducing errors by eliminating sometimes hard-to-read handwriting.

What's known as "e-prescribing" has grown nationwide in recent years. Many patients, doctors and pharmacists find it time-saving and helpful.

But some New York medical leaders have expressed qualms about requiring e-prescribing in almost all situations and about the law's penalties. They include the possibility of fines, license loss or even jail.

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