

From: Denise Howard
Sent: Monday, March 29, 2004 4:03 PM
To: CONTACTLENSRULE
Subject: contact lens Rx release

Thank you for allowing input on the FCLCA. Prescribing doctors need to be able to write the quantity of contact lens refills a patient may obtain just as we do with pharmaceutical agents. The Rx should also not be able to be filled at multiple locations since the patient could then obtain an unlimited supply of contact lenses on a prescription which should be verified annually.

I am an optometrist practicing in Indiana and am required by state law to see my patient annually in order to renew the contact lens Rx. I only allow the patients who order contact lenses in my office to order a one year supply because the Rx expires at the end of the year. We will not order any more contact lenses until the patient returns for an eye health evaluation. If all is well at that examination a new contact lens Rx is given with a one year expiration date.

A patient who had already ordered a one year supply of contact lenses from my office requested another one year supply from 1-800 Contacts. We received a FAX from them, with no date and time, for verification of the Rx that expired in 10 days. The patient was notified that the Rx expired in 10 days and we asked her to schedule a health evaluation so that we could renew the Rx she currently had or make any necessary changes to improve her ocular and visual condition. We emphasized that she could then have the Rx filled wherever she chose. She refused to schedule because "she did not want to" and informed us that we had to release the Rx because it had not officially expired and she was entitled to it. I am still responsible for the health of my patient, yet am being forced to release an Rx that should not have been able to be filled and would not have been filled in my own office.

Doctors should be able to quantify the number of contact lenses the patient is allowed to have in one year. There should be a written Rx on file with a set number of refills allowed that is effective from only a single supplier. Otherwise, the patient can order from multiple internet suppliers and obtain an unlimited supply of contact lenses. In recent years I have seen a lot of painful red eyes and complications from patients who have been ordering whatever they wanted without any controls at all on the supplier. If this new law is supposed to help consumers then there should be more clearly defined requirements such as the ones I suggested.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Denise Howard, O.D