



## Committed to Safe Online Pharmacy Around the World

### Frequently Asked Questions About the .Pharmacy TLD Program

#### General Issues

##### 1. *What is .pharmacy?*

.Pharmacy is a Top-Level Domain (TLD) like “.com” or “.net.” Uniquely, .pharmacy is a TLD dedicated to patient safety. .Pharmacy gives patients an easy way to access safe medicines and health information provided legally via the Internet.

##### 2. *How does .pharmacy benefits patients?*

Millions of patients worldwide are getting healthcare products and information via the Internet. At any one time there are approximately 35,000 to 50,000 active online drug sellers, but the vast majority of these sites – roughly 96% -- do not appear to be in compliance with applicable laws. Currently there is no easy way for patients to know that what they buy online is legitimate and safe. .Pharmacy fills this gap as there is no possible way to fake legitimacy as the seal of quality is the web address itself. Patients seeking safe online medications and health information should shop to the right of the dot – Be safe. Choose smart. Shop .pharmacy.

##### 3. *What are the goals of .pharmacy?*

Improving patient safety and protecting public health is the goal of .pharmacy. This includes:

1. Restricting the use of the .pharmacy domain names to legitimate website operators that meet 10 core safety standards, and
2. Keeping .pharmacy out of the hands of a third party that may allow illegal activity to occur, endangering the public health.

#### International Operations

##### 4. *Who runs the .pharmacy registry?*

The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy® (NABP®), a not-for-profit international, impartial professional organization that supports its member boards of pharmacy in protecting the public health, is the administrative and responsible organization. NABP members include the 50 US states, four US jurisdictions, Australia, the Bahamas, nine Canadian provinces, and New Zealand. .Pharmacy is managed by an international coalition of stakeholders who are members of the community supporting .pharmacy, including the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP).



## **5. Who supports .pharmacy?**

The FIP, the global federation of 126 national associations of pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists with official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO), supports .pharmacy. .Pharmacy also enjoys support from a variety of global nonprofit organizations, patient groups, trade associations, regulatory authorities, government agencies, law enforcement organizations, pharmaceutical manufacturers, and pharmacies. See more at [www.safe.pharmacy](http://www.safe.pharmacy).

## **6. Is .pharmacy global?**

Though based in the US, NABP is an international not-for-profit organization with members in the US, Australia, the Bahamas, Canada, and New Zealand. NABP, through .pharmacy, is committed to growing its coalition of stakeholders globally to ensure .pharmacy operates in a manner consistent with international laws and standards. Specifically, .pharmacy is an international program that will:

- a. Work with nations to establish a National Standard Setting Committee for each jurisdiction where .pharmacy domain names will be sold (eg, a National Standard Setting Committee for France, Germany, Japan, Australia, etc) or establish less formal relationships as dictated by the needs of each nation.
- b. Work with LegitScript, an international Internet pharmacy verification company that works with INTERPOL and the governments of Japan, Ireland, Italy, the US and others, to evaluate .pharmacy applications up front and to monitor .pharmacy websites for continued compliance with applicable laws and international standards.
- c. Coordinate with international regulatory bodies when reviewing international .pharmacy applicants to ensure compliance with applicable laws.
- d. Partner with international organizations to spread the word about .pharmacy so patients globally may easily identify legal and safe websites offering health information, services, and medications.
- e. Participate in global forums (meetings, conferences, workshops, etc.) to gather input on .pharmacy from international stakeholders.

## **7. Who may apply for a .pharmacy domain name?**

Pharmacies and prescription drug-related organizations worldwide that are approved by the appropriate jurisdictions are eligible to register for a .pharmacy domain name.

## **8. Are all jurisdictions “open for business” right now?**

NABP has relationships with the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Spain, Australia, and Hong Kong, which enables the program to review applicants in these countries for approval. NABP continues to form relationships with countries around the world to work toward creating a more widespread program.

## **Jurisdictional and Legal Issues**

### **9. What standards are being used for Internet pharmacies operating a .pharmacy domain?**

Pharmacy applicants are being evaluated in two areas :

- a. Universal baseline standards that need to be met regardless of jurisdiction, eg, pharmacy licensure, compliance with law, no affiliation with illegal actors/entities.
- b. Specific national standards developed by the various National Standard Setting Committees, to

take into account the nuances of a country's practice and regulation.

**10. Does .pharmacy facilitate prescription drug importation?**

No. Websites operating a .pharmacy domain must comply with the laws both where they are operating from (eg, Germany) and where they offer to ship drugs to (eg, the US). Drugs offered for sale must be approved or authorized to be marketed in the country or economy where the consumer purchasing the medication is located. This policy is proactively enforced by monitoring where the website offers to ship. For example, if the site advertises that it will ship to France or the US then it must only sell medicines with regulatory approval in that market, in addition to operating in compliance with all other applicable laws and standards.

**11. How does .pharmacy ensure its approved websites are operating legitimately?**

.Pharmacy uses a three-part process to ensure all approved sites are operating legitimately in the jurisdictions where they are based and where they offer to ship:

- a. LegitScript performs an initial review and analysis of the applicant to check for compliance with laws and possible affiliations with criminal organizations;
- b. Applicable regulatory authority(ies) confirm that the applicant's licensure or registration is in good standing or with the support of the applicable regulatory authority, NABP will confirm this; and;
- c. NABP reviews the information provided in the application and, when available, searches its disciplinary databank.