

Pentobarbital injection

On 4 June 2021 new regulations will come into effect to require the secure storage of pentobarbital injection. The change affects veterinary practices and licenced organisations that use pentobarbital injection for humane euthanasia of animals.

What is changing?

The *Controlled Substances Act 1984* regulates or prohibits the manufacture, production, sale, supply, possession, handling or use of certain poisons, drugs and medicines and specifies minimum regulatory requirements in relation to these.

Minimum regulatory requirements for Schedule 4 drugs include that they are stored out of public access. **Changes to regulation 27 of the [Poisons Regulations](#), in effect from 4 June 2021 will additionally require that pentobarbital injection be stored in a locked container.**

Veterinarians, veterinary practices and organised licenced to keep pentobarbital for humane animal euthanasia must ensure that this drug is securely stored so as to prevent unauthorised access.

Why is the change being made?

Death by intentional pentobarbital toxicity in people linked to the veterinary industry has been the subject of coronial inquests in recent years in both South Australia and Queensland.

Further to recent [review](#) of the national scheduling of pentobarbital injection, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) decided that the current scheduling of pentobarbital injection in Schedule 4 remains appropriate and that suitable controls on the storage and access to pentobarbital injection could be achieved by requiring pentobarbital injection to be stored in a locked container to prevent unauthorised access.

Regulatory changes in South Australia are intended to align with national requirements for storage of pentobarbital injection.

Professional practice guidelines are also published by the [Veterinary Surgeons Board of South Australia](#) in relation to storage of euthanasia solution and record keeping.

For more information

Office of the Chief Pharmacist
Department for Health and Wellbeing
SA Health, Government of South Australia
Health.MTPP@sa.gov.au or (08) 8204 1944

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