



PROGRAM RULES

COVID-19 Home Medicines Service

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Australian Government
Department of Health

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1 INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the Program Rules governing the Home Medicines Service. This document must be read in conjunction with the Pharmacy Programs Administrator (PPA) General Terms and Conditions (General Terms).

Definitions in the General Terms apply in these Program Rules.

2 BACKGROUND

The Home Medicines Service is a temporary program, which aims to support and protect the most vulnerable members of our community from potential exposure to novel coronavirus (COVID-19) by providing a fee per delivery payable to Australian pharmacies for the home delivery of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS) medications thereby removing the need for a patient to visit a Pharmacy.

Vulnerable people, and those in home isolation, will be able to order their PBS and RPBS prescriptions remotely and have these items delivered to their homes to reduce their potential exposure to COVID-19.

3 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

3.1 Pharmacy Eligibility

To be eligible to become a Service Provider under this temporary program, a Pharmacy must:

- Be approved to dispense pharmaceutical benefits as part of the PBS defined in Section 90 of the National Health Act 1953 (Section 90 Pharmacy)
- Agree to ensure that any person delivering medications through this Program abides by the current sanitary and isolation protocols relevant to the containment and management of COVID-19 within the community as issued by each State and Territory
- Be able to support home delivery services
- Register via the PPA Portal (Portal) and continue to meet the above Eligibility Criteria while participating in the Program.

Home Medicines Services must be conducted in accordance with relevant professional practice standards and guidelines, including the following:

- Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's [Professional Practice Standards](#), Standard 3: Dispensing and Other Supply Arrangements
- Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's [Dispensing Practice Guidelines](#), section on Indirect dispensing.

A Service Provider must notify the PPA immediately when it becomes aware of any circumstance, event or fact that may affect the Service Provider's eligibility to participate in the Program, including where their delivery person has breached the sanitary and isolation protocols.

Failure to maintain compliance with any or all of the above Eligibility Criteria may result in the Service Provider being ineligible to participate in the Program.

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3.2 Patient Eligibility

This temporary measure will protect the most vulnerable members of our community and is available to Patients holding a Medicare or Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Card and are:

- isolating themselves at home on the advice of a medical practitioner, for confirmed COVID-19 cases; or
- meeting the current national triage protocol criteria for suspected COVID-19 infection after consultation with either the national COVID-19 hotline, state COVID-19 hotlines, a registered medical or nursing practitioner or COVID-19 trained health clinic triage staff; or
- aged over 70; or
- identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and are aged over 50; or
- people with chronic health conditions or who are immunocompromised; or
- parents with new babies or people who are pregnant.

Deliveries claimed through the Home Medicines Service Program cannot be made to individual patients more than once per month.

In the case where there are existing contracts in place for the delivery of medicines to residential aged care facilities, Home Medicines Service deliveries cannot be made to residents of residential aged care facilities. Otherwise, this service is available to all patients meeting the above eligibility criteria.

3.3 Patient Consent

The Service Provider must obtain appropriate written or verbal consent from the Patient or the Patient's carer prior to providing the Service. A consent form is available online [here](#).

3.4 Eligible Items

A Home Medicines Service must include at least one of the following eligible items:

- Any PBS medications requiring a prescription; and
- Any RPBS medications requiring a prescription.

This does not preclude the patient from ordering one or more non-Eligible Items to be delivered in the same order.

4 REGISTRATION

To register as a Service Provider, a Community Pharmacy must register via the Portal.

It is the responsibility of the owner/Pharmacist Manager of the Service Provider to ensure that the Pharmacy's registration is up to date at all times. Service Providers must notify the PPA within 14 days of the following changes:

- a. Change of ownership; and
- b. Change of Section 90 approval number.

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5 CLAIMS

5.1 Eligible Services

For the purposes of this program, a Home Medicines Service consists of the delivery of one or more Eligible Items to the home of an eligible patient. Transmission of the prescription to the Service Provider can be through either:

- online ordering;
- mailed prescriptions;
- faxed/emailed prescriptions; or
- electronic transfer of prescriptions technology.

Under the Home Medicines Service Program deliveries to individual patients cannot be made more than once per month.

5.2 Supporting Documentation

The following information must be retained by the Service Provider for seven years to support any claim for payment made under these Program Rules:

- a. Section 90 number at the time of the provision of the Home Medicines Service;
- b. Identifier of Registered Pharmacist who dispensed the medication(s) (e.g. AHPRA registration number);
- c. Identifier of person undertaking the delivery (full name);
- d. How the delivery person complied with the current sanitary and isolation protocols relevant to the containment and management of COVID-19 within the community;
- e. Consent from the Patient - either in writing or verbally with a declaration by the dispensing pharmacist that they have obtained verbal consent;
- f. Patient's name and address;
- g. Patient's Medicare/DVA Card number;
- h. Which of the eligibility criteria in Clause 3.2 applies to this Patient;
- i. List of all PBS/RPBS prescription medicines delivered to the Patient each time a delivery was made

Supporting documentation can be electronic or hard copy.

5.3 Claims Submission

Service Providers must submit claims online via the PPA Portal.

Services must be claimed by the end of the following calendar month (e.g. services provided in April must be claimed by 31 May). Claims submitted outside this time frame will not be paid and cannot be resubmitted.

All information entered on the Claim must be correct as any inconsistencies will prevent claim submission.

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6 PAYMENTS

Approved Service Providers may claim a fee for the provision of a Home Medicines Service to Patients that meet the Eligibility Criteria in Clause 3.2. Supporting documentation is required to be retained for each service claimed as per Clause 5.2.

A fee of \$7.77 is payable by the PPA for provision of each eligible Home Medicines Service.

Service Providers cannot apply any additional Patient charge for a service if it is being claimed through this Program.

All claims for payment must be supported with the required information. Requests for clarification and/or further substantiation must be met within the requested timeframe. Failure to provide a satisfactory response may lead to rejection of the claim for payment.

If a Service Provider fails to comply with the General Terms and/or these Program Rules, Clause 5 of the General Terms will apply and the PPA and the Australian Government may at their discretion pursue debt recovery.

Payment for this Program is retrospective and the Service Provider must retain evidence for seven years (as specified in Clause 7) to substantiate that the Pharmacy met the Program requirements when providing the services.

7 AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

The Service Provider must retain records for seven years from the date of submitting a Claim to substantiate the data contained in the Claim.

Service Providers participating in the Program will be subject to audits by the PPA to ensure the Services are provided in accordance with the General Terms and these Program Rules. Eligible Community Pharmacies that do not provide Services in accordance with the General Terms and these Program Rules may no longer be able to participate in the Program or be eligible to receive Program payments, and repayment may be required. Under section 137.1 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995*, giving false and misleading information is a serious offence.

8 RESOURCES

Program resources are available for download from www.ppaonline.com.au.

This includes a Patient Consent Form.



CONTACT THE SUPPORT CENTRE: 1800 951 285 | support@ppaonline.com.au