



Supply and PBS claiming from a medication chart in residential aged care facilities

Following full implementation of this initiative, a standardised national medication chart or compliant equivalent will be used by prescribers, pharmacies and residential aged care facility (RACF) staff to administer, order, supply and claim PBS/RPBS medicines in eligible RACFs. The medication chart will serve as a single source of information for those providing care to residents that will improve medication safety for residents, and decrease the duplication of paperwork and administrative burden for health professionals. Prescribers will no longer need to complete a traditional PBS/RPBS prescription form for most PBS/RPBS items ordered and supplied for residents.

Certain PBS/RPBS medicines will still require a written prescription from the prescriber, in addition to an order on the medication chart, including:

- all Authority required items requiring prior approval (including PBS/RPBS items with increased quantities and/or repeats)
- All items only available under special arrangements (Section 100)
- Controlled Drugs (ie 'Dangerous Drugs' or 'Schedule 8 drugs')

Authority required (STREAMLINED) items will not require a separate written prescription, provided the prescriber writes the appropriate streamlined authority code on the medication chart.

When is this initiative starting?

The initiative will be phased in from 1 July 2012, subject to the passage of Commonwealth PBS - related legislation, and state legislation that will permit the medication chart to serve as a prescription for most medicines.

What does 'phased in' mean?

As part of this initiative, a paper-based national residential medication chart (NRMC) is being developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, in consultation with the aged care sector, prescribers, pharmacists and other stakeholders. The initial version of the NRMC will be introduced on 1 July 2012 in selected RACFs, allowing aspects of the chart and supporting documentation to be refined following feedback on how the chart performs.

The NRMC and other components of the initiative will be tested comprehensively in RACF locations where state legislation permits the use of the chart as a prescription. The NRMC testing is expected to take up to six months, including evaluation. While other chart products that comply with the legislation may also be used, it will be a commercial decision for medication chart providers, and RACFs, as to whether they choose to participate in the initiative before the NRMC has been fully tested and any amendments to the chart requirements have been finalised.

Once the NRMC elements have been tested to maximise medication safety and administrative efficiency, further amendments may be required to the PBS legislation and documentation to support the safe transition from existing arrangements. Once these are known, the NRMC and other chart products will need to be updated to comply with the legislation. Compliant chart products may be used by RACFs so that medicines can be supplied, and eligible PBS/RPBS medicines claimed, from the medication chart.

What changes will be required for residential aged care facilities, pharmacists and prescribers to participate in the testing sites from 1 July 2012?

Training materials for RACF staff, prescribers, and pharmacists on the use of the NRMC will support implementation of the NRMC in the testing sites. Pharmacists' dispensing software will be upgraded by software vendors as part of the normal monthly PBS updates, to ensure that new paperless claims may be made for eligible PBS/RPBS medicines from the NRMC. DHS-Medicare systems will assess claims for these medicines from 1 July 2012. Information materials will draw attention to new chart elements, including the need for prescribers to specify duration of therapy, inclusion of streamlined authority codes on the chart, and medicines for which a traditional PBS/RPBS prescription will still be required, such as Controlled Drugs.

Further notes for pharmacists

Unlike other Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement (5CPA) programs, pharmacies do not need to register for this initiative. The initiative is available to PBS approved community pharmacies who supply eligible RACFs providing residential care as defined in the *Aged Care Act 1997*.

Apart from the exceptions listed above, pharmacists will be able to supply and claim for PBS/RPBS medicines supplied to residents in eligible RACFs using a compliant medication chart as the record of supply. It is essential that pharmacists liaise with RACFs they supply to ensure that the medication chart being used complies with the legislative requirements for prescribing, supply and PBS claiming. Pharmacists will also need to include the RACF's residential aged care service identification number [RACS Id] on each occasion a PBS/RPBS medicine is supplied under the new arrangements.

Claims for PBS/RPBS medicines made under this initiative will not require a copy of the medication chart to be sent to DHS-Medicare but will be processed under a 'paperless claiming' process. However, pharmacists will need to keep a copy of the compliant medication chart used to make a 'paperless claim' for a period of 2 years.

Further notes for prescribers

When visiting eligible RACFs, prescribers will complete the medication chart (the NRMC or compliant equivalent) in the usual manner and will only have to prepare traditional PBS/RPBS prescription forms for medicines that are excluded from this initiative (as listed above). Prescribers may be general medical practitioners or specialists, dentists, optometrists, or nurse practitioners permitted to prescribe under the PBS.

Further notes for RACFs

RACFs eligible under the *Aged Care Act 1997* may participate in this initiative. For ongoing benefits from this initiative, RACFs will need to change the type of medication chart they are currently using to the NRMC or compliant equivalent, once the final specifications have been determined. RACFs that do not wish to participate in this initiative will continue to use their current medication charts.

Information and resources about this initiative are available from www.5cpa.com.au

Further information about the National Residential Medication Chart (NRMC) Project is available at www.safetyandquality.gov.au

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