

Addendum to the *Guidelines for the Continued Dispensing of eligible prescribed medicines by pharmacists*

Conclusion of emergency measures and expansion of ongoing arrangements to permanently include additional medicines groups

1 JUL
2022

Background

Continued Dispensing is the supply of an eligible medicine to a person by an approved pharmacist, where there is an immediate need for the medicine but the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) prescriber is unable to be contacted and/or is unable to provide an electronic prescription. The person must have previously been supplied the medicine on the basis of a PBS prescription. Additional conditions are summarised below.

This addendum provides additional information to PSA's *Guidelines for the Continued Dispensing of eligible prescribed medicines by pharmacists* ('Guidelines') to clarify specific or modified requirements under the ongoing, permanent arrangements.

Summary of this addendum

Original document	<i>Guidelines for the Continued Dispensing of eligible prescribed medicines by pharmacists</i> (Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, 2018; updated September 2020)
Reason for this addendum to the Guidelines	<p>To reflect the following measures under Commonwealth legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conclusion on 30 June 2022 of the <i>National Health (Continued Dispensing – Emergency Measures) Determination 2020</i>, initially put in place for the 2020 bushfire crisis and later extended to support the COVID-19 pandemic, and expansion of the ongoing Continued Dispensing arrangements from 1 July 2022 to permanently include additional medicines groups to the statins and oral contraceptives, as recommended by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) in November 2021.
Commonwealth instrument	<i>National Health (Continued Dispensing) Determination 2022</i>
Key issues [relevant section of the Determination]	<p>The following additional practice-related changes are effective from 1 July 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PBS prescriber must be unable to be contacted and/or is unable to provide an electronic prescription. [section 3.02] Note: The previous wording, that "it is not practicable for the person to obtain a valid prescription", is no longer acceptable. In addition, "PBS prescriber" means the PBS prescriber who most recently prescribed the medicine being requested. The pharmacist must supply a maximum quantity or number of units of the pharmaceutical benefit item (medicine). [section 3.09] The Closing the Gap PBS Copayment Program (reduction or removal of the PBS copayment for eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) applies to medicines supplied under Continued Dispensing.

Specified conditions

It is important that pharmacists refer to and are guided by the [full PSA Guidelines](#) when considering options in response to a patient's request to supply a medicine without a prescription.

Further, the ongoing, permanent Continued Dispensing arrangements (from 1 July 2022) specify that the approved pharmacist must be satisfied of the following [relevant section of the [Determination](#)]:

- The PBS prescriber (who most recently prescribed the PBS medicine) is unable to be contacted and/or is unable to provide an electronic prescription [section [3.02](#)].
- The person has previously been supplied the medicine on the basis of a PBS prescription [section [3.03](#)], and the last supply was based on a valid prescription [sections [3.06](#)].
- The person's therapy is stable [section [3.04](#)].
- The person has been taking the medicine regularly for an uninterrupted period, and in that time the PBS prescriber has assessed the person's condition and determined there is a need for ongoing treatment with the medicine [section [3.05](#)].
- The person was not supplied with the medicine under Continued Dispensing arrangements in the 12 months before the requested supply [section [3.07](#)].

Additionally, the pharmacist must:

- supply a maximum quantity or number of units of the PBS medicine [section [3.09](#)]
- ensure the person (or agent, other than the pharmacist) signs a declaration acknowledging they are being supplied the pharmaceutical benefit (medicine) without the presentation of a valid prescription [section [3.08](#)].

The following table provides addition information or clarification for pharmacists to implement the ongoing, permanent Continued Dispensing arrangements.

Issue	Amendments / additional information to clarify PSA's guidelines [relevant section of the Determination]
Eligibility	The pharmacist must be satisfied of the points above for a person to receive a supply of an eligible PBS medicine by Continued Dispensing [sections 3.02 – 3.09].
Legislation	In addition to the Commonwealth Determination , supply of medicines under Continued Dispensing is subject to any relevant state or territory legislation or emergency public health orders . Pharmacists should refer to PSA's COVID-19 microsite to access the most up to date information.
NSW	An extension to the emergency order has been authorised (to 30 September 2022). This means medicines not included in the new Continued Dispensing arrangements may be supplied as non-PBS (private) supply in accordance with the authorisation .
QLD	The relevant legislation is now the Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation 2021 (this replaces the information in Appendix 1 (p. 11) of the Guidelines).
VIC	An extension to Public Health Emergency Order #2 has been gazetted (to 22 December 2022). This means medicines not included in the new Continued Dispensing arrangements may be supplied as non-PBS (private) supply in accordance with the authorisation .

<p>Eligible medicines</p> <p>S8 medicines</p> <p>Authority medicines</p> <p>Maximum quantity</p>	<p>Under the ongoing, permanent PBS Continued Dispensing arrangements, medicines in addition to the statins and oral contraceptives have been included based on PBAC recommendations. They are predominantly for the management of chronic disease, such as asthma and other lung conditions, diabetes and heart disease, as well as medicines for the treatment of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).</p> <p>The list of medicines is available under Schedule 1 of the National Health (Continued Dispensing) Determination 2022. These medicines will be flagged in dispensing software and PBS Online.</p> <p>Medicines supplied under Continued Dispensing are subject to: PBS patient contributions and refund requirements; immediate supply 20 day and 4 day rule; and count towards the patient's PBS Safety Net threshold.</p> <p>Schedule 8 medicines (Controlled Drugs) are not included in these arrangements.</p> <p>Authority Required (Streamlined) and Authority Required medicines are included but not increased quantities.</p> <p>Only up to the PBS maximum quantity or number of units may be supplied.</p>								
<p>Dispensing software forms</p> <p>Patient consent</p> <p>Record of supply</p> <p>Prescriber communication</p>	<p>Use the two Continued Dispensing forms generated by dispensing software as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="443 853 1430 1406"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="443 853 938 952">Modified Repeat Authorisation Form</th> <th data-bbox="938 853 1430 952">Consumer Declaration and Prescriber Notification Form</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="443 952 938 1115"> <p>Person to sign a declaration providing consent for supply by Continued Dispensing and to acknowledge receipt of the medicine.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="938 952 1430 1115"> <p>To indicate the person understands they were supplied the medicine without consultation with their prescriber.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="443 1115 938 1240"> <p>Record details of the Continued Dispensing supply. [See also under 'Documentation' below.]</p> </td> <td data-bbox="938 1115 1430 1240"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="443 1240 938 1406"></td> <td data-bbox="938 1240 1430 1406"> <p>Notify the person's most recent PBS prescriber (or practice) that the medicine was supplied without a prescription by Continued Dispensing.</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>A copy of all completed and signed forms must be kept for two years from the date of supply.</p>	Modified Repeat Authorisation Form	Consumer Declaration and Prescriber Notification Form	<p>Person to sign a declaration providing consent for supply by Continued Dispensing and to acknowledge receipt of the medicine.</p>	<p>To indicate the person understands they were supplied the medicine without consultation with their prescriber.</p>	<p>Record details of the Continued Dispensing supply. [See also under 'Documentation' below.]</p>			<p>Notify the person's most recent PBS prescriber (or practice) that the medicine was supplied without a prescription by Continued Dispensing.</p>
Modified Repeat Authorisation Form	Consumer Declaration and Prescriber Notification Form								
<p>Person to sign a declaration providing consent for supply by Continued Dispensing and to acknowledge receipt of the medicine.</p>	<p>To indicate the person understands they were supplied the medicine without consultation with their prescriber.</p>								
<p>Record details of the Continued Dispensing supply. [See also under 'Documentation' below.]</p>									
	<p>Notify the person's most recent PBS prescriber (or practice) that the medicine was supplied without a prescription by Continued Dispensing.</p>								
<p>Documentation [section 3.10]</p>	<p>The pharmacist must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> record the information that the pharmacist used to support their decision to supply; and prepare information about the supply that the pharmacist will send to the person's PBS prescriber. <p>The information that must be recorded and prepared (above) must include a statement that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the medicine supplied is a pharmaceutical benefit that can be supplied under these Continued Dispensing arrangements; the specified conditions under sections 3.02 to 3.05 of the Determination are satisfied; the pharmacist is satisfied that the medicine needs to be supplied to facilitate continuity of treatment. 								

**Appendix 2 of
PSA guidelines**

Under **Eligible medicines** box: additional medicines are included from 1 July 2022 based on PBAC recommendations – full list is available in **Schedule 1** of the *National Health (Continued Dispensing) Determination 2022*.

Other resources to support pharmacists

- **PBS Continued Dispensing Arrangements – Frequently Asked Questions**
- If a person does not have their Medicare, DVA or Centrelink card, contact the PBS general enquiries line, 132 290 (follow phone prompts for option 1), for assistance.
- PBS claiming enquiries – 132 290 (follow phone prompts for option 2)
- Pharmacists should contact their dispensing software vendors for any queries about PBS Continued Dispensing claiming using pharmacy dispensing software.
- PSA's **COVID-19 microsite**