



Information for Prescribers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners and their peak bodies

Closing the Gap Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Co-payment Program Changes

Under the Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement, the Australian Government committed to enhancing the Closing the Gap (CTG) Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) Co-Payment program.

From 1 July 2021, the following changes will come into effect:

- A new centralised patient registration database for the program, managed by Services Australia, will go live. Current registration details will be transferred to the new database.
- Any PBS prescriber or AHPRA registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner registered with Medicare as a provider can register eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for the program via Health Professional Online Services (HPOS) if they are not already registered.
- Once a PBS prescriber or AHPRA registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner registered with Medicare as a provider has assessed an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person as being eligible for the program, they can authorise a HPOS delegate to act on their behalf to enter the registration details into HPOS. Before you can link your delegate to your HPOS account they will need to register for their own Provider Digital Access (PRODA) account.
- Eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can be registered for the program no matter where they live within Australia, and regardless of their chronic disease status.
- This registration will cover Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people even if they move to a different health clinic.
- PBS prescribers will no longer be legally required to write or electronically print 'CTG' on eligible PBS prescriptions for registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. However, annotation of a PBS script will help community and Section 94 Approved Private Hospital pharmacists, when dispensing the medicines, know that the patient is registered for the program.



- Any PBS prescriber can issue PBS General Schedule medicine prescriptions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that are registered for the program.
- PBS prescriptions issued by PBS prescribers within public hospitals will now be eligible to be dispensed by any community pharmacy or Section 94 Approved Private Hospital pharmacy.
- PBS prescribers can confirm if Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are registered for the program via HPOS prior to issuing a PBS script to be covered under the program.

Please note:

- The program is only for self-identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and no other patient groups.
- The registering health professional must be of the view that the patient would experience setbacks in the prevention or ongoing management of their condition/s if the patient did not take the prescribed medicine and that the patient would be unlikely to adhere to their medicines regimen without assistance through the program.
- Section 94 Approved Private Hospital pharmacies can still dispense PBS prescriptions covered under the program.
- Section 94 Public Hospital pharmacies are still not able to dispense PBS prescriptions covered under the program.
- The program will continue to apply to prescriptions for PBS General Schedule medicines only. PBS medicines supplied under a special supply arrangement established under Section 100 of the *National Health Act 1953*, e.g. Highly Specialised Drugs are not covered under the program.
- Questions in regards to registering as a Medicare Provider or use of HPOS need to be directed to Services Australia. Contact details can be found via [Health professionals contact information – Services Australia](#).

