

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

What is changing?

From 2013, residential aged care services will be able to use a standardised medication chart. The standardisation of charts will improve resident safety, and reduce the administrative burden for pharmacists and pharmacy staff, as the new chart will be able to be used as a prescription for most medicines.

When the new arrangements come into operation in 2013, doctors and other prescribers will no longer need to complete a traditional PBS/RPBS prescription form for most PBS/RPBS items ordered for residents. Pharmacists will be able to use a copy of the order on a standardised medication chart to supply PBS/RPBS medicines to residents in aged care services. Until the new arrangements are in place in 2013, current medication supply and claiming practices will continue.

Who is developing the new requirements for standardised medication charts?

Requirements for the new charts will be derived from the design and testing of a paper-based National Residential Medication Chart (NRMCM) by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, in consultation with the aged care sector, prescribers, pharmacists and other stakeholders.

Why can't the new arrangements be introduced now?

For two reasons:

1. the NRMCM needs to be tested in selected residential aged care services to make sure it works the way it should; and
2. legislation in your state or territory needs to be changed to allow the medication chart to take the place of a prescription. This is not likely to be completed until at least early 2013, with states and territories making the necessary legislative changes at different times.

The initial version of the NRMCM will be introduced on 1 August 2012 in selected residential aged care services in NSW, allowing aspects of the chart and supporting documentation to be refined following feedback on how the chart performs.

The testing is expected to take up to six months, including evaluation. Once the NRMCM has 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 medication charts and PBS supply practices in residential aged care services.

Once these are known in early 2013, the NRMCM and other commercially available charts will need to be updated to comply with PBS and state and territory legislation. Compliant charts may then be used by aged care services to authorise supply, and claiming of eligible PBS/RPBS medicines.

What changes will be required for residential aged care services, pharmacists and doctors to participate in the testing sites from 1 August 2012?

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care is contacting individual aged care services and their supplying pharmacists in NSW to participate in the testing of the NRMCM and training materials.

While your dispensing software will be upgraded by software vendors to accommodate the new chart arrangements, only those pharmacists supplying PBS/RPBS medicines to the selected NSW residential aged care services involved in the NRMCTesting will be able to participate in the new arrangements in 2012.

Similarly, the only doctors who will be participating in 2012 are those who prescribe medicines for residents at the selected residential aged care services testing the NRMCTesting.

It's important to remember that the new arrangements will not be available until after your particular state or territory legislation has been modified, which is expected in 2013.

What medicines won't be part of the new arrangements?

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 ('Schedule 8' medicines)

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

Further notes for pharmacists

Unlike Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement (5CPA) programs, pharmacies do not need to register for these new arrangements. PBS approved community pharmacies who supply residential aged care services as defined in the *Aged Care Act 1997* will be able to be involved.

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, ***once the new arrangements are permitted in their state or territory***. In 2013, it will be important for you to liaise with the residential aged care services you supply to ensure that the medication chart being used complies with the state and Commonwealth legislative requirements for prescribing, supply and PBS claiming.

Further information will be available for pharmacists following testing of the NRMCTesting.

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

Further information about the NRMCTesting Project is available at www.safetyandquality.gov.au

The *Supply and PBS claiming from a medication chart in residential aged care facilities* initiative is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing as part of the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement between the Commonwealth and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

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