



FACT SHEET NATIONAL HEALTH PLAN

A GUIDE FOR PRESCRIBERS

Interim arrangements for prescriptions for supply of medicines: Supporting telehealth patients and healthcare professionals

As part of the National Health Plan, Electronic Prescribing is being fast tracked. Work to upgrade healthcare providers' clinical software is well underway, and is expected to be ready by May 2020 (refer to the fact sheet [here](#)). In addition, there are immediate options available for patients to receive medicines via telehealth services.

Medical services for patients confined to their homes



Doctors, nurses and mental health professionals are able to deliver bulk-billed services via telehealth until 30 September 2020 via phone or video conferencing. More information on telehealth can be found [here](#).

Interim arrangements for prescriptions process to support telehealth services



Step 1

As a prescriber, you will still create a paper prescription, during a telehealth consultation. This prescription will need to be signed as normal or using a valid digital signature.



Step 2

You can then create a clear copy of the entire prescription (a digital image such as a photo or pdf including the barcode where applicable) to send on to the patient's pharmacy of choice via email, text message or fax. If your patient prefers to receive the legal paper prescription you will need to mail it to them.



Step 3

This can be sent via e-mail, fax or text directly to the patient's pharmacy of choice.

If able, you should send the pharmacy the paper prescription as soon as possible. If you are unable to send on the paper prescription, you will be required to retain the paper prescription for a period of 2 years for audit and compliance purposes.

Medicine delivery services



Once the patient's chosen pharmacy has received the digital copy of the prescription via email, text or fax, the pharmacy will deliver medicines to the patient at the address on the prescription. Prescribers should check that they have the correct address for patients during the telehealth consultation.

Existing prescriptions and repeats



Patients with existing paper prescriptions or repeats who are confined to their homes will need to ask someone to visit the pharmacy on their behalf with the paper prescription. If this is not possible, patients can seek a new prescription from the prescriber and follow the steps above.

Please note: Schedule 8 and 4(D) medicines such as opioids and Fentanyl are not part of this interim arrangement and are to be supplied under the current prescribing arrangements.

Please note: these interim arrangements are temporary and will cease in accordance with the COVID-19 National Health Plan telehealth measure (currently ceasing on 30 September 2020).