

Accessing PBS subsidised medicines

Natural disasters, such as floods and fires, can make it difficult for the community to access PBS medicines through the usual outlets and channels. This information is to assist you and your family in obtaining PBS subsidised medicines during an emergency event in Queensland.



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Obtaining PBS medicines in an emergency without a PBS prescription

In an emergency you can still obtain your PBS medicine without a PBS prescription. If you can get to your usual community pharmacy, they will be able to supply you with your PBS medicines using a variety of arrangements (depending on the situation). For instance, they may provide you with three days worth of medicines or contact your doctor for a verbal prescription.

You will still be expected to pay the PBS or DVA co-payments for verbal prescriptions or the cost of the medicines for an emergency supply. The cost of a three-day emergency supply will not count towards your PBS Safety Net.

Obtaining prescription medicine if your community pharmacy is flooded or inaccessible

If you can't get to your usual community pharmacy the best alternative is to visit another community pharmacy, if possible.

In an emergency situation, your GP's prescriptions can be filled by Queensland Health public hospital pharmacies. However, please be aware that hospitals may not stock the full range of medicines prescribed by your GP, as the needs of hospital and community patients are different.

Obtaining prescription medicines when you don't have money

In all but the most urgent cases, try and organise emergency payment from Centrelink first so that you are able to pay the legally required co-payment for the medicines.

In an urgent situation, you may be able to negotiate a credit arrangement with your community pharmacy or public hospital pharmacy. If a community pharmacy or a public hospital agrees to dispense medicines without collecting a co-payment, they will record the details and are likely to ask you to pay any co-payments later.

Obtaining PBS medicines without a Medicare card, or DVA or Centrelink concessional cards

Your community pharmacy or public hospital can get your card details for you by calling PBS. This means that:

- your eligibility to receive PBS medicines can be confirmed
- these medicines will still be recorded for Safety Net purposes
- if you have a concession card, the patient co-payment will be at the concessional level.

You can request a replacement Medicare card at www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/public/update/index.jsp

You will still be expected to pay the PBS or DVA co-payments.

Replacements for lost medicines

If you have lost your medicine your community pharmacy can dispense more in an emergency situation, even if the prescription was last filled less than 20 days ago. Any co-payments will not count towards the PBS Safety Net.

Obtaining special medication that require special authority

If your medications require special authority, the community pharmacist can call the PBS to get authority to dispense these types of prescription medicines or to dispense the medicine again, even without your prescription or if it is 'too soon'.

Obtaining medicines urgently when you can't get to a community pharmacy or hospital

For urgent assistance with obtaining your medicine in an emergency situation, contact State Emergency Services (SES) to arrange evacuation or alternative supply. You can contact the SES on 132 500.



Further information:

For further information to help you before, during and after a natural disaster:

- view Queensland Health's fact sheets at www.health.qld.gov.au/healthieryou/disaster
- view Emergency Management Queensland's Prepare for cyclone, storm, flood and tsunami now! information at www.emq.qld.gov.au/emq/css/beprepared.asp
- view Australian Emergency Management's community awareness publications at www.em.gov.au/Publications/Communityawarenesspublications/Pages/default.aspx
- contact your nearest Queensland Health public health unit.

For further information, contact your nearest Queensland Health public health unit:

Brisbane North	Tel: 3624 1111	Darling Downs	Tel: 4631 9888	Mount Isa and Gulf	Tel: 4744 9100
Brisbane South	Tel: 3000 9148	Gold Coast	Tel: 5668 3700	South West	Tel: 4656 8100
Bundaberg	Tel: 4150 2780	Hervey Bay	Tel: 4184 1800	Sunshine Coast	Tel: 5409 6600
Cairns	Tel: 4226 5555	Logan	Tel: 3412 2989	Townsville	Tel: 4753 9000
Central Queensland	Tel: 4920 6989	Mackay	Tel: 4911 0400	West Moreton	Tel: 3413 1200
Central West	Tel: 4652 6000	Moreton Bay	Tel: 3142 1800		