

Continued Dispensing Initiative

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Target audience: Pharmacists

Purpose

This fact sheet informs pharmacists of the amendment to the [Health \(Drugs and Poisons\) Regulation 1996](#) (HDPR) regarding supply of pharmaceutical benefits under the [National Health \(Continued Dispensing\) Determination 2012 \(the Determination\)](#).

Background

Changes to the *National Health Act 1953* (the Act) mean that certain pharmaceutical benefits may be supplied by an approved pharmacist without a prescription under the Continued Dispensing of PBS Medicines in Defined Circumstances initiative. Continued Dispensing allows pharmacists to supply eligible Pharmaceutical Benefit (PBS) and Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefit (RPBS) medicines when there is an immediate need for the medicine to continue but it is not practical to obtain a prescription. The initiative complements existing supply provisions permitted by the HDPR, including urgently communicated prescriptions and emergency supply. The Determination specifies the medicines and the conditions that must be satisfied for an approved pharmacist to supply under the Determination.

Issues

- The amendment to the HDPR clarifies that a pharmacist in Queensland as an 'approved pharmacist' under the National Health Act 1953 may supply an eligible medicine to a patient in the circumstances stated in The Determination.
- Eligible medicines, including medicine brands, are outlined in the Determination. Some of these medicines include oral hormonal contraceptives and lipid modifying agents.
- The Determination requires that an approved pharmacist consider the [Guidelines for the Continued Dispensing of eligible prescribed medicines by pharmacists](#), issued by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, when making a supply of a pharmaceutical benefit to a person under the Act.
- It is the responsibility of pharmacists to make sure that they are complying with the requirements of The Determination and the HDPR. All other requirements in the HDPR about the supply of dispensed medicine, including the provisions about labelling and making a record of supply, apply.

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