

QScript Implementation Report – March 2022

QScript, Queensland’s real-time prescription monitoring system, was made available for all relevant health practitioners on 27 September 2021 with the full commencement of the *Medicines and Poisons Act 2019* (MPA) and the Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation 2021 (MPMR).

This report sets out details about the implementation of QScript in the first five months to the end of February 2022.

QScript activity

Health practitioner registration

Currently, the following health practitioners are eligible to register for QScript:

- medical practitioners
- pharmacists (including intern pharmacists)
- nurse practitioners
- endorsed midwives
- dentists
- endorsed podiatrists and podiatric surgeons.

Relevant health practitioners (HPs) were able to register for QScript from 14 December 2020, however this capability was not actively promoted by the Department of Health until 24 May 2021, when all relevant HPs (identified through their registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency – Ahpra) were sent an email inviting them to register.

A follow-up invitation email was sent on 23 September 2021.

Between 14 December 2020 and 28 February 2022,
24,579 health practitioners registered for QScript, accounting for approximately
61% of relevant health practitioners in Queensland.

Figure 1 and **Figure 2**, below, show that the number of QScript registrations between December 2020 and May 2021 was negligible, however sharp increases in daily registrations were seen in late May, September and October 2021, coinciding with:

- the sending of the QScript registration invitation emails (24 May and 23 September 2021)
- MPA commencement (27 September 2021)
- when relevant HPs were compelled to use QScript under the MPA (28 October 2021).



Figure 1. Total number of QScript registrations, from 14 December 2020 to 28 February 2022 inclusive.

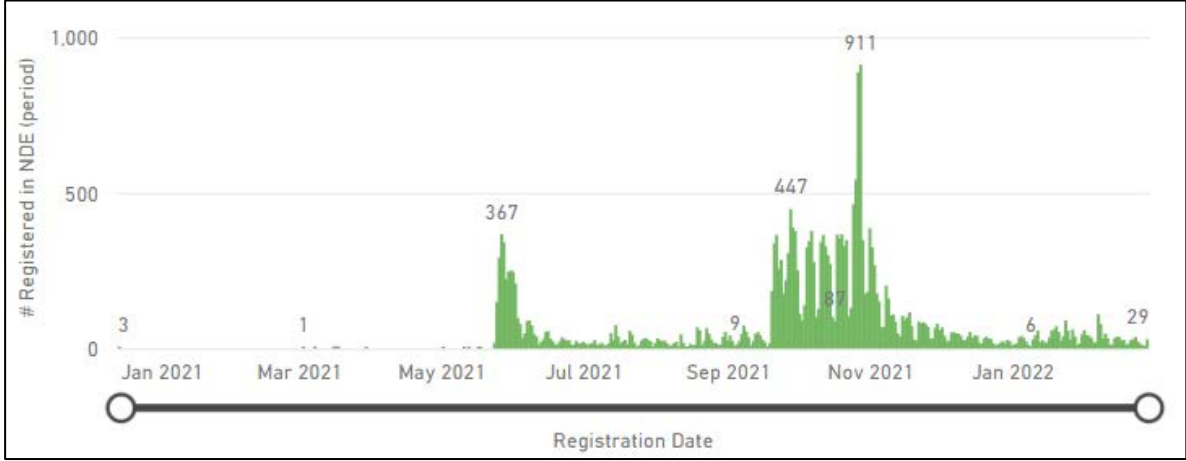


Figure 2. Number of daily QScript registrations, from 14 December 2020 to 28 February 2022 inclusive.

The percentage of HPs in each Primary Health Network (PHN) who had registered for QScript as at 28 February 2022 ranged from approximately **49%** to **67%** as shown in **Figure 3**, below.

PHN	# Registered in NDE (period)	# Total Registered AHPRA (LTD)	% Registered in NDE (period)	% Total Registered NDE (LTD)
⊕ Darling Downs and West Moreton	2188	3274	66.83 %	66.83 %
⊕ Brisbane South	6134	9506	64.53 %	64.53 %
⊕ Brisbane North	6029	9918	60.79 %	60.79 %
⊕ Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast	3487	5936	58.74 %	58.74 %
⊕ Gold Coast	2935	5020	58.47 %	58.47 %
⊕ Northern Queensland	3097	5416	57.18 %	57.18 %
⊕ Interstate or Unspecified	511	996	51.31 %	51.31 %
⊕ Western Queensland	198	401	49.38 %	49.38 %
Total	24579	40467	60.74 %	60.74 %

Figure 3. Percentage of health practitioners in each Primary Health Network (PHN) registered for QScript, from 14 December 2020 to 28 February 2022 inclusive.¹

¹ The PHN for each HP was determined by their Principal Place of Practice as recorded with Ahpra.

Registered in NDE (period) is the number of HPs registered with QScript during the reporting period; **# Total Registered AHPRA (LTD)** is the total number of Queensland-based HPs registered with Ahpra over the life of QScript to the end of the reporting period; **% Registered in NDE (period)** is the percentage of Queensland-based HPs who registered with QScript during the reporting period; **% Total Registered in NDE (LTD)** is the percentage of Queensland-based HPs registered with QScript over the life of QScript to the end of the reporting period.

Figure 4, below, shows the percentage of Queensland-based HPs (identified through their Principal Place of Practice recorded with Ahpra) who have registered for QScript, broken down by health practitioner type. As at 28 February 2022:

- Approximately **80% of Queensland pharmacists** had registered for QScript (5723 pharmacists).
- Approximately **62% of Queensland medical practitioners** had registered for QScript (17,150 medical practitioners).

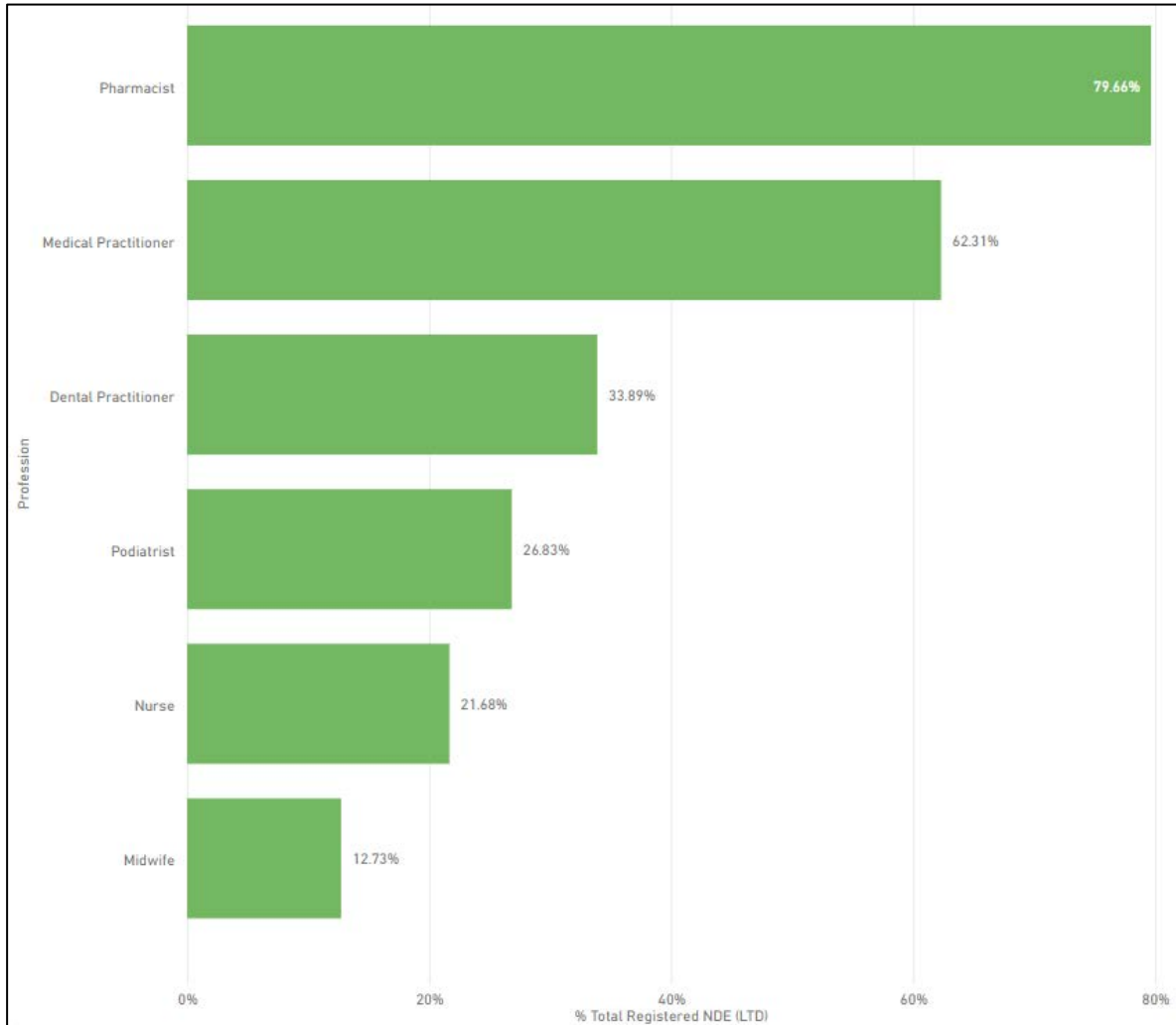


Figure 4. Percentage of Queensland-based health practitioners who registered for QScript for each health practitioner type, from 14 December 2020 to 28 February 2022 inclusive.²

² 'Dental Practitioner' refers to dentists only; 'Podiatrist' refers to endorsed podiatrists and podiatric surgeons only; 'Nurse' refers to nurse practitioners only; and 'Midwife' refers to endorsed midwives only. Health practitioners were identified as being Queensland-based based on their Principal Place of Practice as recorded with Ahpra.

Health practitioner activity

QScript was made available for HP use on 27 September 2021. From 28 October 2021 all relevant HPs were compelled to check QScript for patient records before prescribing, dispensing or giving a treatment dose of a monitored medicine for a patient.

Between 27 September 2021 and 28 February 2022, there were **19,235 unique active QScript users** (i.e. users who searched for or viewed a patient record), accounting for approximately **78% of QScript registrants**.

Figure 5, below, shows that the total number of active users has continued to rise since implementation.

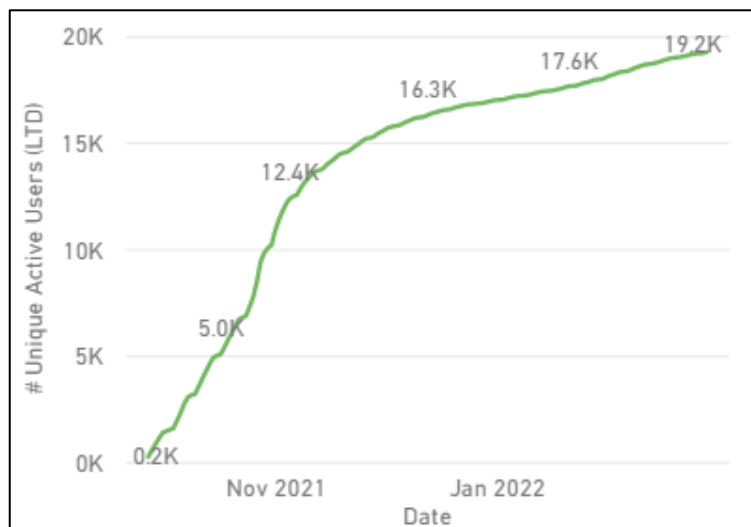


Figure 5. Number of active QScript users from 27 September 2021 to 28 February 2022 inclusive.

Figure 6, below, shows that currently, in general:

- On weekdays, approximately **19%** of QScript registrants use QScript.
- On weekends and public holidays, approximately **4%** of QScript registrants use QScript.

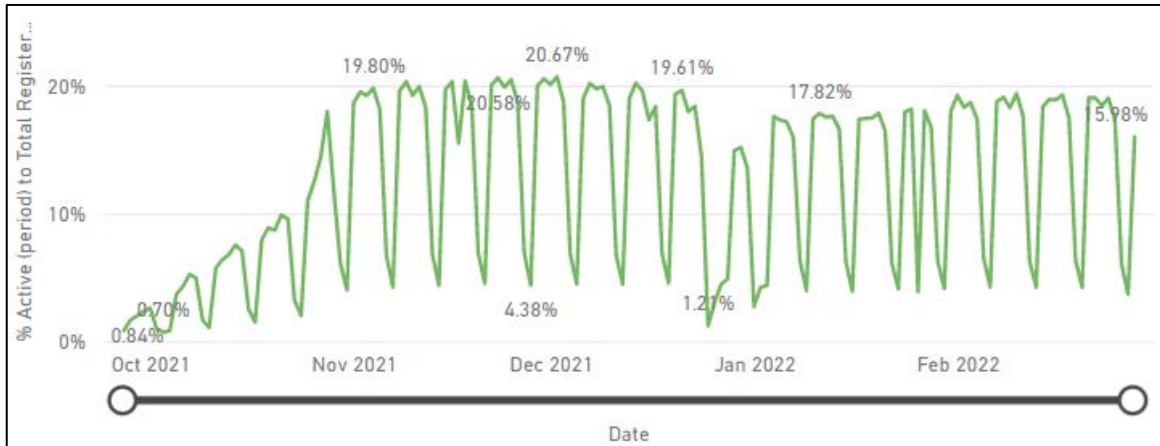


Figure 6. Percentage of QScript registrants who were active QScript users each day, from 27 September 2021 to 28 February 2022 inclusive.

In individual PHNs, the percentage of QScript registrants actively using QScript in the reporting period ranged from approximately **76%** to **82%** as shown in Figure 7, below.

PHN	# Active Users (period)	# Total Registered NDE (LTD)	% Active (period) to Total Registered (LTD)
+ Darling Downs and West Moreton	1,785	2188	81.58 %
+ Northern Queensland	2,484	3097	80.21 %
+ Gold Coast	2,341	2935	79.76 %
+ Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast	2,762	3487	79.21 %
+ Brisbane North	4,698	6029	77.92 %
+ Western Queensland	151	198	76.26 %
+ Brisbane South	4,658	6134	75.94 %
+ Interstate or Unspecified	353	511	69.08 %
Total	19,232	24,579	78.25 %

Figure 7. Percentage of QScript registrants in each Primary Health Network (PHN) who were active QScript users, from 27 September 2021 to 28 February 2022 inclusive.³

³ The PHN for each HP was determined by their Principal Place of Practice as recorded with Ahpra.

Active Users (period) is the number of HPs who were active users (i.e. searched for or viewed a patient record) during the reporting period; # Total Registered NDE (LTD) is the number of HPs who were registered with QScript over the life

Figure 8, below, shows active users as a percentage of the number of QScript registrants, broken down by health practitioner type:

- Approximately **91% of QScript-registered pharmacists** used QScript during the reporting period (5213 pharmacists).
- Approximately **78% of QScript-registered medical practitioners** used QScript during the reporting period (13,321 medical practitioners).

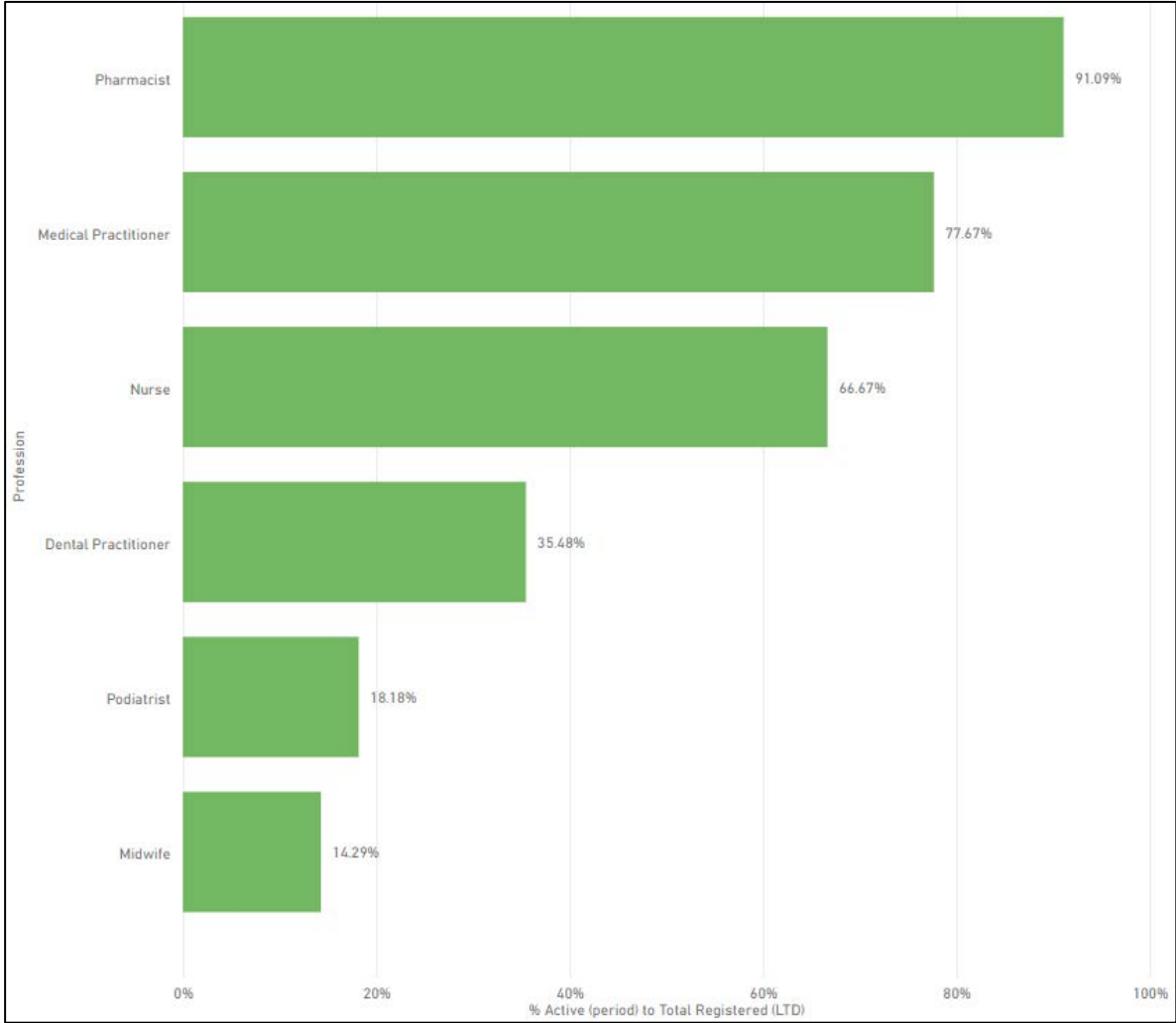


Figure 8. Percentage of QScript registrants who were active QScript users, by health practitioner type, from 27 September 2021 to 28 February 2022 inclusive.⁴

QScript to the end of the reporting period; **% Active (period) to Total Registered (LTD)** is the percentage of QScript registrants who were active users during the reporting period.

⁴ ‘Nurse’ refers to nurse practitioners only; ‘Dental Practitioner’ refers to dentists only; ‘Podiatrist’ refers to endorsed podiatrists and podiatric surgeons only; and ‘Midwife’ refers to endorsed midwives only.

Engagement, support and education

Engagement

- A decision was made to cancel the February 2022 Monitored Medicines Steering Committee meeting.
- Reactive responses to enquiries from stakeholders continue to be provided, as required, in relation to QScript, new legislative requirements and medicinal cannabis.
- The QScript Management Unit (QMU) Frequently Asked Questions resource continues to inform the drafting of responses to stakeholder enquiries.
- A post-implementation survey is being disseminated to QScript users via the members of the Monitored Medicines Steering Committee and other health practitioner stakeholder organisations.

Support

The QScript technical support service is provided by the QScript vendor. HPs can access support by calling 13 S8INFO (13 78 46) and selecting option #2, or by emailing it.qscript@health.qld.gov.au

The vendor continues to work closely with the Department of Health to monitor the system's performance and to deploy bug fixes and enhancements to improve system useability. This includes (but is not limited to) improvements to:

- QScript registration portal functionality
- the QScript log-in portal and process
- PIN expiry times
- the vendor's ticketing support system, ConnectWise.

The 13 S8INFO (13 78 46) telephone enquiry service changed on 27 September 2021 as confidential information can no longer be provided over the telephone and advice about patient drug dependence status is not required for regulatory purposes under the MPA. The telephone number now primarily operates as a connection to the QScript technical support service provided by the vendor.

It is intended that the 13 S8INFO number will be retired by the end of 2022 at which time, as in other jurisdictions, HPs will use a single help desk telephone number to directly contact the vendor for technical support.

Education

The Department of Health has provided a considerable volume of support materials to guide HPs in the use of QScript and the related areas of the MPA.

QScript Learning portal

The QScript Learning portal was made available to HPs in June 2021 and provides access to a series of eLearning modules, webinars, videos and factsheets to help orient HPs to QScript and enhance clinical practice with monitored medicines.

Resources are available in three key learning areas:

- **Your legislative requirements:** Two eLearning modules detailing legislative requirements in relation to QScript and the MPA.
- **How to use QScript:** A series of factsheets, videos, and resources to help HPs access and navigate QScript.
- **Clinical best practice:** A suite of eLearning modules containing the latest clinical information and advice on monitored medicines and how to best prescribe and dispense them in practice.

The following tables provides a summary of the number of users who have completed the eLearning modules and the completion rates to 31 December 2021.

Learning area - Your legislative requirements

Modules	Number completed	% completion rate
QScript and the New Act	3582	77%
High Risk Clinical Scenarios	1403	65%

Learning area - Clinical best practice

Modules	Number completed	% completion rate
Understanding Pain, Opioid Therapy and Managing Inherited Patients	202	42%
Opioid Rotation	110	59%
Opioid Overdose and Naloxone	102	76%
Opioid Deprescribing and Withdrawal Management	76	61%
Gabapentinoids	95	69%
Benzodiazepines and Z-Drugs	94	57%

Modules	Number completed	% completion rate
Quetiapine	101	66%
Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Referral Pathways	50	78%
Effective Communication: Prescribers	51	56%
Effective Communication: Pharmacist	58	48%

The portal hosts a collection of videos and recorded webinars. Webinars were delivered live online across August and September 2021 and were recorded for future reference. Below is a summary of the uptake of the videos and webinars available, as at 31 December 2021.

How to use the QScript system videos

Title	YouTube views
Healthcare happens in real time	6860
QScript login and patient search	4522
QScript Alerts	363
QScript Approvals, QOTP Episodes and Correspondence	306

Webinars summary

Title	Live date	Live views	YouTube views
Introducing QScript and the New Medicines and Poisons Act (2019) <i>Dr Felicity Jensen and Dr Bill Loveday</i>	4 August 2021	121	487
Having Meaningful Discussions About Opioid-Related Risks <i>Professor Suzanne Nielsen</i>	25 August 2021	87	189

Title	Live date	Live views	YouTube views
Queensland Opioid Treatment Program for private prescribers <i>Dr Susan Ballantyne and Nicolette Ellis</i>	31 August 2021	93	141
Queensland Opioid Treatment Program transitional arrangement for pharmacists <i>Dr Susan Ballantyne and Nicolette Ellis</i>	1 September 2021	300	371
Is it persistent pain, opioid use disorder or both? <i>Dr Ian Thong and Anthony Hall</i>	1 September 2021	102	288
Getting QScript ready <i>Dr Susan Ballantyne and Nicolette Ellis</i>	6 September 2021	41	442
QScript training for medical doctors and nurse practitioners <i>Dr Susan Ballantyne and Nicolette Ellis</i>	8 September 2021	39	1818
Tricky practice scenarios: an expert panel discussion <i>Joy Gailer, Melanie Proper and Dr Geraldine Chew</i>	8 September 2021	105	234
QScript training for pharmacists <i>Dr Susan Ballantyne and Nicolette Ellis</i>	13 September 2021	203	1064
QScript training for dentists <i>Dr Susan Ballantyne and Nicolette Ellis</i>	15 September 2021	44	253

The portal continues to be hosted by Insight, Centre for alcohol and other drug training and workforce development delivered by Metro North Mental Health – Alcohol and Drugs Service.

Other web-based resources

- **Queensland Health website**

Queensland Health’s QScript website continues to be a useful source of information for HPs and other stakeholders. The table below shows the number of users who have accessed the website, from September 2021 to February 2022 inclusive.

Month	Total # of users	# of new users
September 2021	10,083	5660
October 2021	22,622	11,760
November 2021	19,133	10,517
December 2021	10,427	5736
January 2022	8022	4242
February 2022	6721	3575

Available at: www.health.qld.gov.au/qscript

- **QScript health practitioner landing page**

A one-stop-shop for QScript registration and access to QScript and the QScript Learning portal. Information about system maintenance or outages is also shared here.

Available at: www.qscript.health.qld.gov.au

- **QScript Help Content**

Comprehensive information to help HPs use QScript is available, and is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect system changes to ensure adequate information is available to support users.

Available by clicking the 'Help' link when using QScript or at:

<https://help.qscript.health.qld.gov.au/qld-hp.htm>

Consumer communications plan and website

A consumer communications plan based on the outcomes of consumer market research has driven the development of a range of communications collateral which was provided to Hospital and Health Services, PHNs, peak consumer agencies and rural and remote services in Queensland.

- Tonic TV and Aboriginal Health TV videos were rolled out to GP practices and Aboriginal Medical Services between November 2021 and February 2022: <https://vimeo.com/649819541/3ba0b89e96>
- Consumer information packs provided stakeholders with resources for public facing and internal communications, including intranet bulletins, newsletter articles and suggested social media content.
- Recipients were encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback on these materials by emailing the Queensland Health Communications team at communication@health.qld.gov.au

- Stakeholders can access high resolution images for use in communication activities related to QScript from the Queensland Health Digital Asset Library: <https://assetlibrary.health.qld.gov.au/web/1c9d80903af7f7a2/qscript/>
- A consumer-focused webpage providing information about QScript is available at: www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/all/qscript

A report on outcomes of the consumer communications plan is yet to be finalised.

Legacy database management

The Monitoring of Drugs of Dependence System (MODDS) is no longer operational, and work is underway to de-commission the database.

The Department of Health intends to maintain a cloud-based archive of the system with access to historical information for a regulatory and other purposes.

Internal change

From 27 September 2021, the previous Monitored Medicines Unit ceased operation. A new QScript Management Unit was formed to manage the administration of QScript.

- The administration of prescribing approvals and the regulatory aspects of the Queensland Opioid Treatment Program were transferred to the Healthcare Approvals and Regulation Unit.
- The management of compliance with QScript requirements under the MPA is managed by the Medicines Compliance and Human Tissue Unit.

National issues

Queensland and all the other state and territory jurisdictions, along with the Commonwealth, remain members of the national Real-Time Prescription Monitoring (RTPM) Implementation Steering Committee.

The committee is progressing work on an information sharing framework and data governance to facilitate information sharing between state and territory real-time prescription monitoring systems.

Future plans

- Policy development for consideration of potentially expanding access to QScript to other HPs.

- Finalisation of the latest iteration of the QScript Privacy Impact Assessment.
- Discussions with Ahpra and the Office of the Health Ombudsman about potentially providing direct access to QScript and/or QScript information.
- Collaborate in research initiatives, where lawful and appropriate.
- Conduct a 12-month post-implementation survey.
- Further develop QScript reporting capability, including development of reports related to:
 - monitored medicine prescribing and dispensing activity
 - QScript alert generation
 - trends in monitored medicine use.

Additional links

- *Medicines and Poisons Act 2019*:
www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2019-026
- Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Regulation 2021:
www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2021-0140#
- New medicines, poisons and pest management regulatory framework:
www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/licences/medicines-poisons/medicines-poisons-act