



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia



Capital
Health
Network
Partnering for better health



Pharmaceutical
Society of Australia

12 October 2020

MEDIA RELEASE

GPs and Pharmacists working together to support the rollout of electronic prescriptions in the ACT

Pharmacists and doctors across the ACT are working together to ensure the introduction of electronic prescribing provides maximum benefits to patients across the Territory.

The introduction of electronic prescribing is a major change in the way patients access prescription medicines and is one which is supported by pharmacists and doctors.

The new system gives patients convenient access to their medicines and improves patient safety, with a reduction in the risk of errors that can be associated with written prescriptions.

There are two ways a patient can be given an electronic prescription.

The first is the token system which is based on an SMS message containing a QR code being sent to the patient's smartphone. The patient then takes their smartphone to their preferred pharmacy and with the pharmacist's guidance, the QR code is scanned and the pharmacist then downloads the individual prescription.

With this system, each prescription requires a different QR code and multiple SMS messages, so this system is best suited for patients who have an acute condition and don't require multiple medications or prescriptions.

For those who have chronic conditions or need multiple medications, the other option for electronic prescriptions is called an Active Script List. The patient provides their consent to their GP or pharmacy with access to their list of prescriptions. The patient just needs to provide identity at their preferred pharmacy to access their prescriptions and medications. It is anticipated that this will be available from November 2020.

With electronic prescriptions the choice remains with the patient and paper-based prescriptions will continue to be fully supported by GPs and pharmacists.

The National President of the Pharmacy Guild, George Tambassis, said the introduction of electronic prescribing was an important development.

National Secretariat

Level 2, 15 National Circuit, Barton ACT 2600

PO Box 310, Fyshwick ACT 2609

P: +61 2 6270 1888 • F: +61 2 6270 1800 • E: guild.nat@guild.org.au

www.guild.org.au



Ref: SPxxxx-x-xxx

“This new system provides ease of access for patients as well as enhanced safety. Also once it is fully bedded-in it will cut administrative work for health professionals, freeing up time to devote to patient welfare.

“However, it is early days in the introduction of this system and it is very important that this change is orderly and carried out in a way that does not put patients at risk of missing their medicines because of confusion about the process.”

PSA ACT Branch President Renae Beardmore said electronic prescribing will present a significant addition to how patients receive and use prescriptions in our community.

“The introduction of electronic prescribing will not only have a positive impact on workflow in the pharmacy with opportunities to streamline dispensing services but also is an important tool when it comes to medication safety,” she said.

“Electronic prescribing will also have a positive impact on how patients handle their prescriptions. Patients will have the ability to use third-party apps to interact with their prescriptions in ways they haven’t been able to in the past, giving them a greater understanding about their prescriptions and flexibility in how they have them filled.”

Capital Health Network CEO Megan Cahill said that electronic prescribing has been fast tracked by the Australian Government.

“To support telehealth consultations, particularly during COVID-19, electronic prescribing has been brought forward to allow patients to get a prescription without a face-to-face consultation with their GP. We believe that electronic prescribing will improve the accuracy and safety of prescribing between GPs and Pharmacists and reduce transcription errors,” said Ms Cahill.

Media enquiries: Peter Waterman 0419 260 827