

# Introduction to Electronic Prescriptions

## What are Electronic Prescriptions?

Electronic Prescriptions are a way of administering medication prescriptions without a traditional paper script. An Electronic Prescription is digitally transferred from the practice software to the patient directly, and then presented to a pharmacy for dispensing. The first type of Electronic Prescription is the token system option, which is similar to the traditional prescription system. The prescriber issues a script as normal, but instead of printing the script the practice software will send a QR code to the patient's mobile phone via SMS or via email, these tokens can also be managed via some prescription tracking apps. The patient then presents this at the pharmacy, where it is scanned and enters the pharmacy dispensing software and is dispensed. The second system for providing Electronic Prescriptions is the Active Script List, through which provides patients with the option to manage multiple electronic prescription tokens in a consolidated list.

## Why do Electronic Prescriptions matter?

Electronic Prescriptions have many benefits to prescribers, dispensers and consumers which can improve the process of engaging with prescription medications. Electronic Prescriptions are an alternative option to paper scripts, removing the risk of the patient losing the script, and speeding up the workflow process of dispensing for pharmacies. Electronic Prescriptions can also be beneficial to any prescriber utilising telehealth services for their patients, as they reduce the administrative burden of dealing with paper scripts through a telehealth appointment. Unlike image-based telehealth prescriptions, Electronic Prescriptions can be used for scheduled drugs. With the introduction of the software updates required to meet the new Active Ingredient Prescribing legislation, all practice software is now going to be enabled for Electronic Prescribing.

## How do Electronic Prescriptions benefit me and my practice?

Electronic Prescribing can offer many benefits to both the patient and prescriber:

- Eliminates risk of lost scripts and needing to rewrite misplaced paper scripts.
- Decreased risk of medication errors.
- Easier script writing for telehealth appointments.
- Can be used for all medications, including scheduled drugs, except for specific special authority drugs.
- Greater choice for patients to manage their scripts.
- No longer need to print and sign scripts – they are electronically signed with prescribers HPI-I.

# Electronic Prescriptions Checklist for General Practice

- ☐ Connect to a Prescription Delivery Service.  
e.g. eRx and MediSecure.
- ☐ Ensure your practice has a Healthcare Provider Identifier – Organisation (HPI-O) and is connected to the HI Service, and ensure your practitioners have Healthcare Provider Identifiers (HPI-I).  
Healthcare Identifiers are managed through HPOS, ensure they are linked in your clinical software.
- ☐ Validate patients Individual Health Identifiers (IHI).  
Some clinical software will validate identifiers automatically, or you may need to look them up manually.
- ☐ Ensure patient's/carer's contact details are updated.  
e.g. mobile number/email address is correct to ensure Electronic Prescription is delivered to the correct person. Reception staff can do this in the waiting room before the their appointment.
- ☐ Ensure your clinical software vendor has provided the updated version which enables Electronic Prescribing.  
Due to the recent Active Ingredient Prescribing (AIP) legislation, all software vendors should have provided updates to software which ensure AIP is enabled. As part of this update, software vendors are also including compliance for Electronic Prescribing.
- ☐ Update your clinical software to enable Electronic Prescriptions.  
e.g. Best Practice – Saffron update.
- ☐ Educate staff on the use of Electronic Prescriptions.  
Online training modules are available through the Australian Digital Health Agency website, as well as advertising/media assets for your practice. The Capital Health Network's Digital Health Team can also assist you with any enquiries. Contact your software provider for specific information regarding the electronic prescriptions functionality available to you.

For ongoing support and education, please visit the Australian Digital Health Agency website, or contact the Capital Health Network's Digital Health Team (see contact information at back of this booklet).

## Websites to visit:

[digitalhealth.gov.au](https://digitalhealth.gov.au)

[proda.humanservices.gov.au](https://proda.humanservices.gov.au)