

Australia invests \$25 M to improve safe use of medicines through pharmacy

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The new Quality, Safety and Effectiveness of Medicine Use and Medicine Intervention by Pharmacists MRFF Grant Opportunity will support the Quality Use of Medicine and Medicine Safety National Health Priority, and is part of the Governments significant ongoing investments aimed at improving access to medicines and the safe use of medicines in the community.

The Landmark \$18.35 billion Seventh Community Pharmacy Agreement (7CPA) signed in June 2020 with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia (Guild) and for the first time, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA), strengthens the critical community pharmacy sector for the benefit of all Australians.

Two key improvements to community pharmacy programs through the 7CPA have now been finalised:

- From 1 January 2021, to help people take the right dose of medicine at the right time, changes to the Dose Administration Aids (DAA) program will increase the base cap of 30 to 60 services per week. This means pharmacists will be able to provide this important service to more patients each week
- From 1 January 2021 the Government will be boosting its investment in the Rural Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance (RPMA), to ensure people living in rural, regional and remote Australia have access to medicines and pharmacy services.

The Government continues to provide essential support to Australia's pharmacists through the COVID-19 National Health Plan.

The existing medicines related COVID-19 measures, including the Home Medicines Delivery Service and Continued

Dispensing emergency arrangements will also continue for a further six months in line with other COVID-19 health measures. More than 1.1 million deliveries have been made by more than 4600 pharmacies through this service.

The government has extended the Continued Dispensing emergency arrangements to 31 March 2021, so people with chronic conditions can obtain their usual medicines at PBS prices.

To better support telehealth arrangements as part of the COVID-19 National Health Plan, the Government has worked with the Australian Digital Health Agency, the Guild and the PSA, to fast track the implementation of Electronic Prescribing. This will make it more efficient for pharmacists to dispense medicines and reduce prescribing and dispensing errors.