Pharmacy Innovations In eHealth

Community pharmacists are the custodians of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and play a vital role in the primary health care of all Australians.

Community pharmacy in Australia leads the way in its willingness to adopt innovative technologies and strategies in its mission to offer the highest standard of pharmacy and health care services.

Whether those innovations are technological, systematic or strategic in nature, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has developed the necessary infrastructure and culture to implement innovation in such a way as to efficiently deliver significant benefits to the Australian public.

In the area of eHealth, no other profession has done more than community pharmacy in terms of investing its own funds to support moves to the eHealth model. Key examples are outlined below.

PBS Online: pharmacy shows its strength and ability in embracing IT

Online Claiming for Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medicines offers an improved claiming solution by allowing pharmacies to submit a claim to Medicare each time a PBS medicine is dispensed.

Online Claiming for PBS was piloted by a small number of pharmacies in 2004 and was followed by an independent evaluation. Medicare implemented the recommendations of the evaluation report and rolled out Online Claiming for PBS to the wider pharmacy community.

- 99.4 per cent of pharmacies utilise PBS online on a daily basis
- Rollout went from four per cent of pharmacies to over 95 per cent of pharmacies within nine months of the Guild indicating to members that it was robust and workable and that an adequate financial incentive was available
- PBS Online is a testament to the willingness and ability of community pharmacy to embrace new technologies where the Guild and dispensing software vendors are actively involved in their design and where appropriate remuneration is provided

National eHealth Record System

The Guild supports the concept of an electronic health record and has invested significant time and financial resources to see such a system become a reality. The Guild will continue to work towards an electronic health record that promotes the use of a multi-channel health care engagement model for pharmacy and patients while providing a clinical information and support system for pharmacists to deliver optimal patient care.

Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions

Community pharmacy has consistently looked for ways to utilise technology to improve patient care and safety in the area of medication management. With over two hundred million prescriptions dispensed every year in Australia, and pharmacists dispensing on average 100 to 200 scripts a day, electronic prescriptions provide a significant opportunity to strengthen patient safety and confidence in dispensing medication.

eRx script exchange

eRx Script Exchange

eRx Script Exchange is an industry-driven partnership focused on Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (ETP). Endorsed by the Guild and led by Australia's largest pharmacy software specialist Fred Health, it brings together expertise in the needs of patients, pharmacists, GPs and medical practitioners, and eHealth.

How patients benefit from eRx Script Exchange:

- Electronic prescribing strengthens patient safety and confidence, through greater accuracy of dispensing and reducing risks
- A better experience for patients, as a result of improving management of patient care between GPs and pharmacies
- It preserves patient choice, ensuring that the patient can go to any pharmacy for dispensing
- It creates a better experience for patients in the pharmacy, as electronic prescriptions are more efficient and accurate to dispense

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia is the national peak body representing community pharmacy. It serves the interests of its members and supports community pharmacy in its role delivering quality health outcomes to all Australians

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National Medication Repository

As part of its commitment to the make best use of technology, the Guild supported the establishment and successful trial of a medication repository (the MedView project) designed to improve patient health outcomes by giving healthcare providers the ability to view a combined record of prescribed and dispensed medications for patients across community, hospital and aged care settings.

The MedView project showed the simplicity in capturing existing prescription and prescribing events via electronic scripts and making this knowledge instantly available to clinician's to improve health outcomes. MedView played a key part of developing national electronic health infrastructure and the Australian Government's national eHealth strategy and is currently being expanded as the National Prescription and Dispense Repository (NPDR).

Whether a patient is going in for day surgery, visiting a new specialist, or having a regular checkup, this combined record of prescribed and dispensed medications for patients delivered through a national medication repository system will allow healthcare providers to see a snapshot of current medicines and, importantly will give an accurate indication of adherence to medications.

A national medication repository has the potential to deliver significant benefits such as:
- Clinical improvements by utilising accurate and timely information flow
- Supporting a range of patient-care events such as emergency room presentations and support 'at risk' patient monitoring regarding the oversupply and undersupply of medications

- Providing a backup audit and risk procedures capability for the appropriate professional and government authorities who regulate health professionals and provide payment subsidies
- The development of a national medication repository which includes all medication events recorded and shared would provide a high value quick win in e-health within Australia which would benefit all Australians particularly those at high risk of medication misadventure

Find-a-Pharmacy: helping patients find the pharmacy services they need

In early 2008, the Pharmacy Guild launched its pharmacy locator service findapharmacy.com.au

Now patients are able to locate pharmacy premises, view opening hours, see what services are provided and even find out which languages are spoken within a pharmacy.

The findapharmacy.com.au service enables patients to print out a map and driving instructions from their front door to the pharmacy. This is particularly useful for travellers who are seeking a pharmacy while on the road.

The data contained on this site may one day contribute to the various services included in an Electronic Health Record, and is another example of community pharmacy preparing for a multitude of forthcoming eHealth services.

GuildCare Programs: Patient support through IT solutions

The GuildCare suite of programs is designed to assist pharmacists in the easy delivery of professional services and support, including medication management programs, compliance and adherence programs. Through the electronic recording and delivery of these services, GuildCare aims to help pharmacists ensure that patients are maximising the benefits from their medications.

The GuildCare programs achieve this by helping pharmacists guide patients to take the right medicines, at the right time, over the

appropriate period, which supports patient compliance to their medicines and adherence to their prescribed treatment over time. This may be an intervention by the pharmacist, a discussion around a patient's self-administration of their medications, assistance to patients by offering dose administration aids, or the recording of interactions with other health care professionals. GuildCare has the software to assist the pharmacist in identifying and easily recording these services

GuildCare Platform (www.guildcare.com.au)

MedsCheck Services	Home Medicines Review	◀ **Add-ons (5CPA Medication Management)**
5CPA PPIs	Private Services	Private Programs	◀ **Primary Package**

guildcare programs   ◀ **Platform Access**