



The Pharmacy  
Guild of Australia

# Vital facts on community pharmacy

1



There are **5,935** community pharmacies in Australia<sup>1</sup>

2

On average, every person visits a community pharmacy **18** times each year, in metropolitan, rural and remote locations<sup>2</sup>.



3



Community pharmacies are the most frequently accessed and most accessible health destination, with over **443.6 million** individual patient visits annually and **2,127 pharmacies** open after-hours, including weekends<sup>3</sup>.

4



In 2023, under the PBS and RPBS, community pharmacies dispensed almost **227 million** Government subsidised (Above Co-Pay) prescriptions<sup>4</sup>.

5



Pharmacists are one of the most trusted professions along with nurses and doctors. Public opinion surveys have shown that **84%** of adults trust the advice they receive from pharmacists<sup>5</sup>.

1. PBS Expenditure and Prescription Report

2. Pearson, D., De lure, R. (2021) NAB Pharmacy Survey 2021. NAB. <https://business.nab.com.au/nab-australian-pharmacy-survey-2021-48091/>

3. GuildLink data

4. Department of Health, Date of Supply Supplementary Report, Accessed at <https://www.pbs.gov.au/info/statistics/dos-and-dop/dos-and-dop>

5. <https://www.roymorgan.com/findings/7244-roy-morgan-image-of-professions-may-2017-201706051543>



6



In capital cities, **97%** of people have access to at least one pharmacy within 2.5 km radius, while in the rest of Australia **66%** of people are within 2.5 km of a pharmacy<sup>10</sup>.

7



More than **95%** of pharmacies nationwide have achieved quality accreditation<sup>7</sup>.

10



There have been over **189 million** electronic prescriptions issued for patients (original and pharmacy repeat prescriptions)<sup>8</sup>.

8



As of 30 June 2022, **99.9%** of PBS or RPBS prescriptions are now claimed electronically online<sup>9</sup>.

11

As of December 2023, there were **37,393** registered pharmacists in Australia. **64%** of pharmacists are women; and about **58%** are under 40 years of age<sup>11</sup>.



9

**53%** of patients say they use one pharmacy for everything or at least one category of product / service. **38%** of patients state they were driven by convenience of location<sup>6</sup>.



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6. CP2025\_Integrated Market Research Report 2018 – Orima Research

7. Quality Care Pharmacy Program

8. Australian Digital Health Agency, [www.digitalhealth.gov.au](http://www.digitalhealth.gov.au), Accessed March 2024

9. <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/annual-report-2021-22>; Page 68

10. The Pharmacy Guild of Australia 2020

11. Pharmacy Board of Australia Registrant Data; December 2023



12



**Seven** Community Pharmacy Agreements have been negotiated between the Government and the Guild, underpinning patient access to PBS medicines and professional services for over 30 years.

13

In 2020–21, **660,071** of all hospitalisations were classified as potentially preventable. Of these, **188,572** potentially preventable public hospitalisations and **62,360** private hospitalisations were due to chronic conditions (excluding diabetes). Medicines adherence is an important role for community pharmacists.<sup>13</sup>



14



Community pharmacies provide a national network of National Diabetes Services Scheme access points for the **1,463,772** Australians with diabetes registered with the NDSS<sup>15</sup>.

16



Pharmacies support public health initiatives such as Opioid Replacement Therapy and needle and syringe programs and participating in the Return of Unwanted Medicines Program improving social, economic and health outcomes.

15

Between July 2022 and June 2023 there were **16.2 million** dose



administration aids provided by community pharmacies to patients to assist them to remain living at home<sup>14</sup>.

17



Community Pharmacist-Led medication adherence interventions have improved adherence rates by **9.3%** and reduced health system costs by **\$1.9 billion**<sup>12</sup>.

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12. Dovepress Journal – Patient Preference and Adherence: Pharmacist-led medication non-adherence intervention: reducing the economic burden placed on the Australian Health Care system

13. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Admitted Patient Care 2021-22; Table 8.2; <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/myhospitals/sectors/admitted-patients>

14. <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/pharmacy-programs-data>

15. <https://www.ndss.com.au/about-diabetes/diabetes-facts-and-figures/diabetes-data-snapshots> (December 2023)