



Electronic Recording and Reporting of Controlled Drugs

All states and territories require pharmacists, medicine wholesalers, doctors and other health care practitioners to record transactions for all controlled drugs in a register. Some jurisdictions also require pharmacists to report dispensing transactions of controlled drugs.

A move from manual to electronic recording and real-time reporting will improve the ability to efficiently monitor the prescribing and dispensing of controlled drugs to help ensure appropriate access to these medicines.

The Electronic Recording and Reporting of Controlled Drugs (ERRCD) initiative aims to develop a nationally consistent system to collect and report data on dispensing of controlled drugs which will complement and support the current controls mandated by the states and territories in their role as regulators.

The ERRCD initiative is funded under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement (5CPA).

The ERRCD initiative

Software was developed for use by all states and territory health departments to enable a nationally consistent electronic system to collect and report data relating to the dispensing of controlled drugs.

The system allows for real-time access to current information on controlled drugs dispensing events for prescribers and pharmacists and provides pharmacists with a Controlled Drug Electronic Register (CDER) which can interface with existing pharmacy dispensing software to assist with reporting of dispensing.

Implementation

Through licensing arrangements, state and territory health departments will evaluate the extent to which the system meets current, and future, jurisdictional needs including but not limited to:

- The migration of data to the new system
- The management of cross-border data-sharing
- How existing legislative frameworks might be strengthened
- How automatic alerts for health professionals might be configured.

Implementation models and schedules are at the discretion of state and territory health departments and will vary as these processes are completed.

Medicines used in this initiative

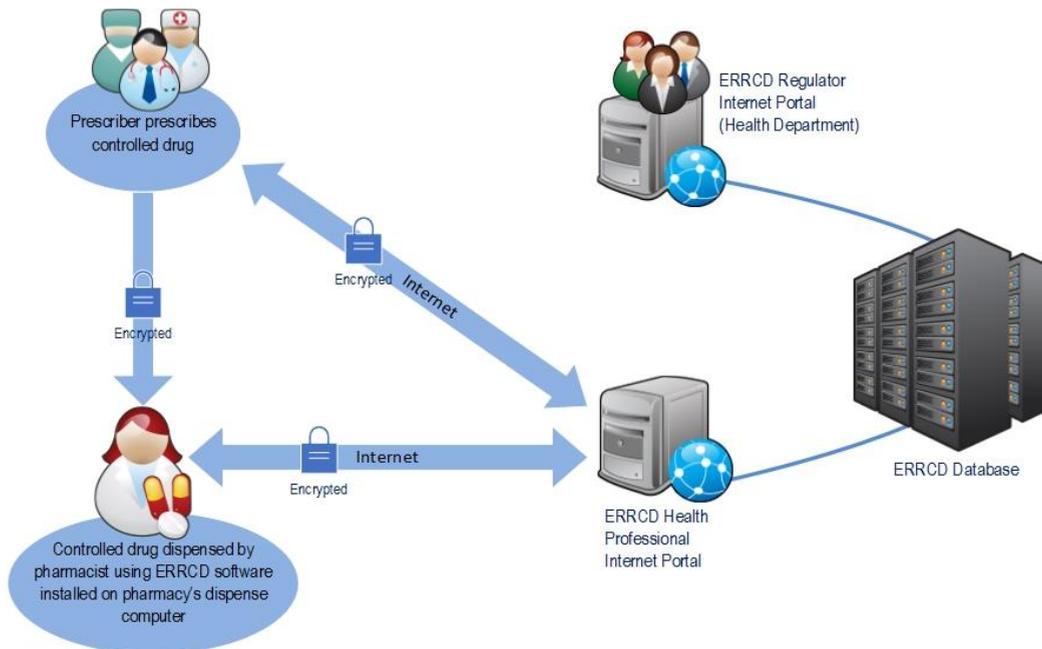
All medicines included in Schedule 8 of the Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Medicines and Poisons (SUSMP)¹, which is given legal effect through state and territory legislation, will be monitored by the ERRCD system. Schedule 8 of the SUSMP includes substances which should be available for use but require restrictions to their manufacture, supply, distribution, possession and use to reduce abuse, misuse and physical or psychological dependence. In addition to Schedule 8 medicines, individual jurisdictions may use the ERRCD system to monitor other medicines liable to misuse or abuse.

All controlled drugs, regardless of whether they are listed in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), will be reported by the system.

Maintaining safe and appropriate use of Controlled Drugs

The ERRCD system will assist state and territory health departments to manage approvals for controlled drug prescribing and is not intended to present a barrier to consumers accessing controlled drugs for legitimate health purposes. It should assist health care professionals to better identify people with abuse or misuse issues and direct them appropriate health care support.

¹ <http://www.tga.gov.au/industry/scheduling-poisons-standard.htm>



What the system will do

The ERRCD system will collect information on all prescribing and dispensing events related to controlled drugs consistent with state and territory legislation. It will be a single source of data for prescribers, pharmacists and state and territory health departments about when and which medicines have been prescribed and dispensed, along with patient details and state and territory authorisations to prescribe controlled drugs.

How the system will work

The diagram shown above illustrates how information will be passed to and from the ERRCD system for an episode of care.

ERRCD is made up of a number of components; accessible via a secure web portal for both prescribers and pharmacists. It will have the capacity to integrate with pharmacy dispensing systems as well as prescribing systems to capture information relating to the provision of controlled drugs.

During a clinical interaction, where implemented, prescribers and pharmacists may use a secure web portal to access to the controlled drugs history for a particular patient in order to make a decision on whether to prescribe or dispense or provide alternative healthcare support.

The system will also allow state and territory health departments access to monitor and manage the system and to direct responses as required to alerts that have been raised by the system.

Pharmacy focused PROJECT

Replacement of paper-based controlled drug registers

A Controlled Drug Electronic Register (CDER) for community pharmacies that interfaces with existing pharmacy dispensing software is being introduced separately to the reporting of dispensing events. Electronic records of controlled drug supplies will improve the accuracy and efficiency of in-pharmacy recording. This will assist community pharmacists to efficiently meet their statutory obligations to maintain records of controlled drugs.

Although there are no national uniform regulations in place specifying the requirements for a CDER, the Australian Government and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia have been working closely with states and territory health departments and the Medical Software Industry Association to ensure that the CDER meets both state and territory requirements and the needs of pharmacists.

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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