



FACT SHEET

Vital facts on community pharmacy

July - August 2020

Australia's system of community pharmacy and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme are recognised as world-leading.

- There are 5,762 community pharmacies in Australia¹
- On average, every person visits a community pharmacy 18 times each year, in metropolitan, rural and remote locations².
- Community pharmacies are the most frequently accessed and most accessible health destination, with over 458 million individual patient visits annually and the vast majority of pharmacies open after-hours, including weekends³.
- In 2018-19, under the PBS and RPBS, community pharmacies dispensed almost 210 million Government subsidised (Above Co-Pay) prescriptions.⁴
- 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.⁵
- 65% of patients say they use one pharmacy for everything or at least one category of product / service. 33% of patients state they were driven by convenience of location⁶.
- More than 94 per cent of pharmacies nationwide have achieved quality accreditation⁷.
- More than 90% of Australian Pharmacies use the Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (ETP) platform of which 4,300 pharmacies use eRx every day⁸.
- As at 30th June 2019, 99.9 per cent of PBS or RPBS prescriptions are now claimed electronically online⁹.

¹ PBS Expenditure and Prescriptions Twelve Months to June 2019: Table 13

² ABS Demographic Statistics, PBS Date of Supply

³ PBS Date of Supply, Guild Digest, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3101.0>

⁴ PBS Expenditure and Prescriptions Twelve Months to June 2019: Table 15(a)

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

⁶ CP2025_Integrated Market Research Report 2018 – Orima Research

⁷ Quality Care Pharmacy Program

⁸ eRx data; <https://www.erx.com.au/for-pharmacists/>

⁹ <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/sites/default/files/annual-report-191019-v2.pdf>; Page 85



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- In capital cities, 97 per cent of consumers are no further than 2.5 km from a pharmacy. In regional areas, 65 per cent of people are within 2.5 km of a pharmacy¹⁰.
- Seven Community Pharmacy Agreements have been negotiated between the Government and the Guild, underpinning pharmacies and the PBS over 25 years.
- As at 31st March 2020, there were 32,777 registered pharmacists in Australia. 63.1% of pharmacists are women; and over 61% are under 40 years of age¹¹.
- 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.
- Community Pharmacist-Led medication-adherence interventions have improved adherence rates by 9.3% and reduced health system costs by \$1.9 billion.¹²
- In 2017–18, 748,000 of all hospitalisations were classified as potentially preventable. Of these, 229,080 potentially preventable public hospitalisations and 64,086 private hospitalisations were due to chronic conditions (excluding diabetes). Medicines adherence is an important role for community pharmacists.¹³
- Between June 2016 and May 2017 there were 14.6 million dose administration aids provided by community pharmacies to patients to assist them to remain living at home.¹⁴
- Community pharmacies provide a national network of National Diabetes Services Scheme access points for the 1,366,857 Australians with diabetes registered with the NDSS¹⁵.

Please note – this information is accurate as at 10th Aug 2020.

¹⁰ Guild Submission to the Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation 2016

¹¹ Pharmacy Board of Australia Registrant Data;

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 2017-18; Table 8.2;

<https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/65254420-b968-4274-a491-bbfd56417602/aihw-hpf-50-factsheet.pdf.aspx>

¹⁴ <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/pharmacy-practice-incentives-program-data>

¹⁵ <https://www.ndss.com.au/wp-content/uploads/snapshots/2020/ndss-data-snapshot-202006-all-types-diabetes.pdf>; Data Snapshot – All types of diabetes (June 2020)