



Community Pharmacy—helping ageing Australians to better health

In Australia there are over 5200 community pharmacies providing older Australians and their families with essential medicines and health care support, helping them remain well and active and able to live in their own home. They also provide essential pharmacy services to residential aged care facilities.

Use of medicines by older Australians

Medicines are one of the most common health interventions for older people. Many elderly Australians, whether living at home or in residential care, use a number of different medicines every day. But medicines also pose a risk and must be used properly for best health outcomes. Older people are particularly vulnerable to unintended or adverse outcomes. Up to 30 per cent of hospital admissions of elderly Australians are related to using or mixing medicines inappropriately.

What can older Australians expect from their community pharmacy?

In 2011, community pharmacy implemented a service charter. This is a customer service statement, informing consumers of their rights, as well as the quality of health care they can expect to receive from their community pharmacy.

Community pharmacists are the most accessible of all health care professionals and provide an array of services to all Australians, including older people, extending well beyond the provision of medicines, such as:

- Providing information and advice on minor health conditions
- Identifying and addressing common adverse effects from medicines
- Identifying and addressing medicine management issues
- Wound care treatment and support
- Continence products and support
- Provision of aids and equipment to enhance independent living
- Medicine reviews
- Tools and equipment to enable people to use their medicines correctly eg. blister packs
- Delivery services to people in need
- Health screening and monitoring services
- Referrals to other members of the health care team

Government funded services

A number of community pharmacy services are funded by the Australian Government under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement. Older Australians may particularly benefit from:

- Home Medicines Reviews
- Residential Medication Management Reviews
- MedsCheck
- Diabetes MedsCheck
- Quality Use of Medicines Maximised in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (QUMAX) Program

For more information about services available through community pharmacies, go to www.askyourpharmacist.com.au or www.findapharmacy.com.au.

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.

For further information contact:

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia

Phone: 02 6270 1888

Fax: 02 6270 1800

Email: guild.nat@guild.org.au

Lvl 2 15 National Circuit, Barton, ACT 2600 Australia
PO Box 7036, Canberra BC ACT 2610 Australia