

## Changes to co-payments for Section 100 Highly Specialised Drugs in NSW

From 1 October 2015, co-payments for a range of Section 100 (s100) Highly Specialised Drugs have been paid by the NSW Government for NSW residents who are patients of NSW public hospitals or authorised community prescribers in NSW.

The NSW Government made the commitment to pay co-payments for a range of s100 Highly Specialised Drugs in March 2015 to help ease the financial burden for people with some cancers and other chronic conditions.

### ***When did the program start?***

The removal of the co-payment commenced on **1 October 2015**.

### ***Which medicines are included in this program?***

In the initial roll out, the NSW Government will pay the co-payment for the following dispensed in the community pharmacy setting:

- **HIV antiretroviral therapy**
- **Hepatitis B medicines**
- **Clozapine (maintenance therapy)**

### ***Who is eligible for the co-payment waiver?***

The changes apply to NSW residents, treated by NSW public hospitals or by authorised community prescribers in NSW, who are prescribed s100 Highly Specialised Drugs under Section 100 of the *National Health Act 1953*.

This includes those who are public non-admitted patients, outpatients or day patients, inpatients on discharge and privately referred, non-admitted patients treated in NSW public hospitals.

There are no changes to co-payments for s100 Highly Specialised Drugs for patients who access care in the private sector in NSW.

The co-payment will be paid by the NSW Government regardless of whether prescriptions are filled through NSW public hospitals or community pharmacies. **These co-payments will count towards the patient safety net.**

## ***How will we know that the patient is able to have the co-payment waived?***

At the point of prescribing, patients being prescribed s100 Highly Specialised Drugs through NSW public hospitals or through authorised community prescribers in NSW will be advised of the commitment. The opportunity to acknowledge that NSW Health will meet the co-payment on their behalf will be formalised by signing a **consent form**.

From 1 April 2016, the patient consent form will be time specific. This means for patients who are issued with a patient consent form from 1 April 2016, they will be **eligible to have their co-payment contribution paid by the NSW Government for all in-scope prescriptions filled during a twelve (12) month period**.

The patient consent form must be presented each time the prescription is filled, including any repeats. By signing the form, the patient agrees to have the co-payment contribution paid by the NSW Government.

**If the patient consent form is not presented to the pharmacy by the patient at the time their medication is being dispensed, then the co-payment cannot be paid on behalf of the patient by the NSW Government.**

A copy of **the patient consent form can be retained on file by the pharmacy**.

**The patient consent form must be completed by an authorised hospital or community prescriber.** The consent form is available online at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pharmaceutical/Documents/s100-copayment-consent.pdf> however a pharmacist **must not** fill the patient consent form out on behalf of their patient.

## ***How are community pharmacists reimbursed for the cost of the co-payment?***

NSW Health has entered into contractual arrangements with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia to ensure eligible patients can access the relevant s100 Highly Specialised Drugs from community pharmacists without having to pay the patient co-payment.

**Community pharmacists will be reimbursed for the cost of the co-payment in addition to a NSW s100 Service Fee.**

**The payment administration system can be accessed through the s100 Highly Specialised Drugs Claiming Portal.** Visit [www.s100.guilsolutions.com.au](http://www.s100.guilsolutions.com.au)

Please refer to the **Pharmacy Flowchart** document for detailed information.

## ***What are the ordering arrangements for s100 HSD medicines?***

s100 HSDs are supplied through major pharmaceutical wholesalers, select pharmaceutical wholesalers under exclusive supply arrangements or direct from the manufacturer.

It is important to note that s100 medicines are exempt from the Community Service Obligation (CSO). This means that there is no obligation from the wholesaler to either supply these medicines, or to supply them at the agreed price on which dispensing remuneration is based. Pricing for s100 HSDs and other s100 medicines is based on the 'agreed ex-manufacturer price' (agreed price).

**It is advised that community pharmacies confirm prior to ordering s100 HSDs or other s100 medicines that the price to pharmacy is no more than the agreed price.**

If you experience any issues with accessing s100 medicines at the agreed price, please notify the Department of Health by emailing the details to [pbs@health.gov.au](mailto:pbs@health.gov.au) and copy in the Guild - [pbs.issues@guild.org.au](mailto:pbs.issues@guild.org.au)

Further information about s100 HSDs and other s100 medicines can be found at: [www.pbs.gov.au/browse/section100](http://www.pbs.gov.au/browse/section100)

## ***What other resources are available?***

### **HIV ART and Hepatitis B**

The **Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM)** and **Positive Life NSW** are organisations which provide information to both consumers and health care professionals about HIV.

Positive Life NSW's **The Choice is Yours** website - [thechoiceisyours.positivelife.org.au](http://thechoiceisyours.positivelife.org.au) - has a range of resources specifically tailored for consumers and pharmacists with regards to the changed dispensing arrangements for HIV. Positive Life NSW maintains a database of community pharmacies which are dispensing HIV medications. If you'd like to be added to their database please send an email to: [contact@positivelife.org.au](mailto:contact@positivelife.org.au) with your pharmacy details.

**Hepatitis NSW** is an organisation which provides information both to patients and health professionals about hepatitis. A range of resources are available on their website [www.hep.org.au](http://www.hep.org.au), including a specific webpage detailing information about Hepatitis B [www.hep.org.au/treatment-2](http://www.hep.org.au/treatment-2).

Further information about dispensing arrangements regarding HIV ART and Hepatitis B medicines can be found on the Australian Government's Department of Health website: <https://www.pbs.gov.au/general/changes-to-certain-s100-programs/faqs-hsd-ca-hiv-hbv-19-june-2015.pdf>.

## Clozapine

### **Clozapine can only be dispensed in the community setting if it is for maintenance therapy.**

The definition of continuing/maintenance therapy is outlined under the clinical criteria applied to appropriate STREAMLINED Authority codes under the PBS.

With regards to the safe supply of clozapine, pharmacists must meet all relevant PBS, state and clozapine monitoring system requirements in order to participate. This procedure involves checking of a patient's pathology results, and details entered into the brand-specific clozapine patient monitoring database prior to dispensing and subsequent claiming.

The two monitoring systems are:

- ClopineConnect™ (for Clopine®) – Access at: [www.clopine.com.au](http://www.clopine.com.au)
- Clozaril Patient Monitoring System (for Clozaril®) – Access at: [www.ecpms.com.au](http://www.ecpms.com.au)

Community pharmacies must register with the respective monitoring database prior to dispensing clozapine. To register, please call:

- **Hospira Pty Ltd (for Clopine®) on 1800 656 403** or
- **Novartis Pharmaceuticals Australia Pty Ltd (for Clozaril®) on 1800 501 768**

Prescriptions written for clozapine should be brand specific. While the two brands of clozapine are 'a-flagged' in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Schedule, patients should be maintained on a single brand throughout therapy. A patient is initiated in the hospital sector on a particular brand of clozapine, and mandatory monitoring is conducted via the clozapine monitoring system set up and maintained by the pharmaceutical sponsor for that brand. **If your pharmacy is to dispense both Clopine® or Clozaril® to patients, you must register for the two respective monitoring databases.**

Further information about these arrangements can be found on the Australian Government's Department of Health website:

[www.pbs.gov.au/general/changes-to-certain-s100-programs/faq-hsd-ca-clozapine-25-june-2015.docx](http://www.pbs.gov.au/general/changes-to-certain-s100-programs/faq-hsd-ca-clozapine-25-june-2015.docx)

## **Need more help?**

If you have any questions about these new arrangements, please contact the Pharmacy Guild of Australia (NSW Branch) on (02) 9467 7100, or email Kathryn Lim at [kathryn.lim@nsw.guild.org.au](mailto:kathryn.lim@nsw.guild.org.au)

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## **References**

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Pharmacy Guild of Australia Victoria (27 August 2015) *Guild Alert: Dispensing Alert – s100 medicines*