

# HIV medication co-payment waiver

## Frequently asked questions for patients

### Accessing HIV treatment in Queensland

Queensland Health has introduced an HIV medication co-payment waiver for people with HIV who are resident in Queensland, regardless of their Medicare status.

#### FAQs

##### **What are the eligibility criteria for the HIV co-payment waiver?**

To be eligible you must be a Queensland resident who is a patient of a:

- Queensland public hospital or sexual health clinic, or
- authorised s100 HIV community prescriber in Queensland, or
- an interstate specialist/prescriber if you live in a border area.

You must also be prescribed HIV medication that is listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and have your prescription filled at a Queensland pharmacy.

Medicare-eligible people can go to either a Queensland public hospital or a community pharmacy, while Medicare-ineligible people must have their prescription filled at a public hospital pharmacy.

##### **Does the HIV co-payment waiver apply to people accessing Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)?**

No. The co-payment waiver is only for HIV medication for the treatment of people with HIV. It does not extend to HIV medication for HIV-negative people for the purpose of PrEP.

##### **What medications are covered by the HIV co-payment waiver?**

Medications for the treatment of HIV that are listed on the [Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme \(PBS\)](#).

##### **I take other medications along with my HIV medication. Are these medications also covered by the HIV co-payment waiver?**

No, only your HIV medication is covered by this co-payment waiver.

##### **Can I access the HIV co-payment waiver at any pharmacy?**

If you are Medicare-eligible, you can access the co-payment waiver at any pharmacy in Queensland.

If you are Medicare-ineligible, you can only have your medication dispensed at a Queensland public hospital pharmacy.

**Why do I have to provide consent at a community pharmacy?**

You need to consent to the community pharmacy providing some of your personal information to the Pharmacy Guild, so that the pharmacy can be reimbursed for the co-payment waiver.

More information is available on the [patient consent form](#).

**What personal information will the community pharmacy give to the Pharmacy Guild?**

The Pharmacy Guild will be provided with your name, Medicare number, postcode and the details of the medication dispensed.

**What happens to my information when I give consent at a community pharmacy?**

The Pharmacy Guild is bound by the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) to protect your personal information and will only use your details for the purposes of reimbursing the community pharmacy.

**What happens if I don't give consent to the community pharmacy? Can I still access the HIV co-payment waiver?**

No. You may decline to complete the patient consent form, in which case you will be responsible for paying the co-payment for your HIV medication.

You can access the co-payment waiver at a public hospital pharmacy without completing a consent form.

**How long is my patient consent form valid for?**

The patient consent form is valid for 3 years, after which time you will need to complete a new form.

**Does the pharmacy keep a copy of my patient consent form?**

No, the pharmacy is not required to keep a copy of your form. You are required to keep your form and present it each time you have a prescription for HIV medication filled at a community pharmacy. A clear copy of your patient consent form (for example, a photo on your phone) is also acceptable.

**What happens if I lose my patient consent form?**

If your patient consent form is lost, damaged or unreadable, you will be asked to complete a new consent form before the pharmacist can dispense your HIV medication. A clear copy of your patient consent form (for example, a photo on your phone) is also acceptable.

**Do I have to provide consent at a public hospital pharmacy?**

No. You are not required to provide written consent if you are having your medication dispensed at a Queensland public hospital pharmacy as hospital pharmacies will not be reimbursed for the co-payment.

**Do I have to be Medicare-eligible to access the HIV co-payment waiver?**

No. People who are a resident of Queensland beyond a short-term stay (three months) and who do not have a Medicare card can access the co-payment waiver at public hospital pharmacies, while they are living in Queensland.

**Do I have to be a Queensland resident?**

Yes, only Queensland residents are eligible to access this program.

**Can I see a doctor outside Queensland and still get my HIV co-payment waiver at a Queensland pharmacy?**

Yes. If you are a Queensland resident living in a border area and meet the eligibility criteria, you can access the program even if you see a doctor outside of Queensland.

**Will co-payments paid by Queensland Health count towards the patient safety net?**

Yes. Co-payments paid by Queensland Health count towards the PBS patient safety net.

**I'm visiting Queensland from interstate/overseas; can I access the HIV co-payment waiver?**

No, only Queensland residents who have been living in Queensland for more than 3 months are eligible to access this program.

**What should I do if the pharmacy tries to charge a co-payment for my HIV medication?**

This should not happen, as pharmacies have received information about the co-payment waiver from Queensland Health and the Pharmacy Guild. If necessary, refer the pharmacy to the [Pharmacy Guild](#).