

Proposed prescribing policy for Medical Practitioners

Introduction

ReturnToWorkSA is seeking feedback on introducing a policy that will require all Medical Practitioners prescribing medication paid for by the Scheme to prescribe under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), where clinically appropriate and available.

Under the policy, ReturnToWorkSA will pay for the reasonable costs of medications that are:

- required as a result of a work-related injury or illness
- requested by a registered medical practitioner or registered dentist
- provided by a registered pharmacist
- provided in accordance with the **Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme** (PBS), where clinically appropriate and available
- provided as a private prescription if the medicine is clinically appropriate and not available on the PBS.

Background

All Australian residents with a Medicare Card are able to receive medication under the PBS, irrespective of compensability.

In South Australia, Medical Practitioners can write private, non-PBS scripts. These fall outside of the Commonwealth Department of Health (DoH) restrictions and guidelines, and are excluded from the patients' PBS Safety Net threshold.

In other jurisdictions, such as Comcare, WorkSafe Victoria and the Transport Accident Commission, all medication must be prescribed under the PBS, where clinically appropriate and available. This policy is supported by the DoH.

ReturnToWorkSA would like to implement a policy to ensure medication paid for by the Scheme aligns with Commonwealth guidelines.

Benefits of a prescribing policy

Improved patient safety

The PBS sets maximum quantities and repeats for drugs of dependence to ensure they are prescribed at safe levels and durations. National programs are in place to provide feedback to prescribers on their prescribing patterns and behaviours.

Improved patient financial status

The PBS Safety Net reduces the cost of prescription medicines for individuals and their families once the Safety Net threshold has been reached. This can reduce a patient's contribution from up to \$38.80 to \$6.30.

Private, non-PBS scripts, do not count towards a patient's PBS Safety Net threshold. Requiring all medication to be prescribed under the PBS will ensure patients' contributions are not higher than required.

Support from Commonwealth Department of Health

The DoH supports this policy and has provided written confirmation that all Australian residents with a current Medicare card are eligible to receive benefits under the PBS, regardless of compensability.

Consultation

ReturnToWorkSA is seeking feedback from Medical Practitioners and associations, Pharmacists, employer associations, and unions on introducing a policy that will require all medication to be prescribed under the PBS (unless otherwise allowed for under its guidelines). This is to identify if there are any unintended consequences of this policy.

Written feedback should be posted or emailed to:

Jodie Blakeley
Program Coordinator
ReturnToWorkSA
GPO Box 2668, Adelaide, SA 5000
Email: Consultation@rtwsa.com

Please provide your feedback to ReturnToWorkSA by
close of business on **Friday 30 June 2017**.

Implementation

Once feedback has been received and considered,
the approved policy will be communicated to all
relevant parties through a number of channels
including direct mail, print and online articles in
medical publications and newsletters.



The following free information support services are available:

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment you can call ReturnToWorkSA through the National Relay Service (NRS):

- **TTY users** can phone 13 36 77 and ask for 13 18 55.
- **Speak & Listen (speech-to-speech) users** can phone 1300 555 727 and ask for 13 18 55.
- **Internet Relay users** connect to NRS on www.relayservice.com and ask for 13 18 55.

For languages other than English call the Interpreting and Translating Centre on 1800 280 203 and ask for an interpreter to call ReturnToWorkSA on 13 18 55. For Braille, audio or e-text call 13 18 55.

ReturnToWorkSA

13 18 55

info@rtwsa.com

© ReturnToWorkSA 2015