



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

COVID-19 – Home Medicine Delivery Services

Updated 22 April 2020

These FAQs contains generic information relating to home medicine delivery services, including information concerning the Australia Post home delivery service.

1. How do I implement a COVID-19 home delivery service in my pharmacy?

The Guild has developed a [COVID-19 Home Delivery of Medicines guide](#) to complement existing pharmacy policies and procedures that meet AS85000 quality accreditation requirements and inform the development and implementation of your pharmacy's COVID-19 home delivery service.

Members are also reminded to review relevant QCPP policies and procedures, including the Distance Supply Checklist, as well as relevant State or Territory legislation, the Pharmacy Board of Australia: Guidelines for dispensing medicines and Professional Practice Standards and guidelines.

Pharmacies must ensure they review and adhere to the requirements in relevant QCPP policies and procedures, including (but not limited to):

- P11F: Deliveries by pharmacy staff (excluding contractors)
- P11G: Selecting third party service provider policy
- T2A: Distance supply checklist

2. How can I update the pharmacy services I offer on findapharmacy.com.au?

Find A Pharmacy (www.findapharmacy.com.au) is the pharmacy online search engine developed by the Guild to help consumers locate a pharmacy and discover the services they provide.

The Find A Pharmacy website is directly linked to your *MyGuild* account and updated in real time. Therefore, it is important you ensure that your *MyGuild* information is up-to-date to ensure customers know what services you offer, including home deliveries, and your opening hours, particularly if this has changed due to COVID-19.

Ensure your contact details are correct and up-to-date so prescribers forwarding telehealth prescriptions can easily find the pharmacy's phone, fax and email details.

3. Do I have to provide a free home medicines delivery service to all of my patients? Whilst I am happy to provide a free service to my regular patients in need, it is financially not viable for my business to expand this service to all patients.

No. Pharmacies are not being mandated nor expected to provide a free home medicines delivery service to all patients.

The Government has introduced the temporary COVID-19 Homes Medicines Services that enables pharmacies to claim \$7.77 per delivery when certain criteria is met, e.g. maximum of one delivery per patient per month. The patient cannot be charged a co-payment under this program.

Pharmacies do not have to provide a home delivery service and claim under this program. Many pharmacies continue to offer a home delivery service and charge a fee to patients, rather than claim under this program.

The Guild understands and continues to advocate on behalf of members that the \$7.77, whilst an increase from the initial proposed \$5, is still insufficient remuneration for many of our members.

4. Can I use a volunteer to deliver the medicines to my patient's homes?

Members are advised to be aware that engaging volunteers in an unpaid capacity to do a service (e.g. home deliveries) that provides benefit to the business (e.g. financial savings or improved business opportunities) will likely put the owner at risk of prosecution under the Fair Work Act.

Members are strongly advised to seek advice from your local Guild branch prior to engaging volunteers to ensure you do not place yourself at risk of prosecution under the Fair Work Act.

When determining if a potential employment relationship exists rather than a volunteer relationship, various factors must be considered, with each case considered on its own facts and arrangements and unique circumstances. If it is OK for one pharmacy, it does not necessarily mean it is OK for yours.

Members are advised to consider other options rather than directly engaging volunteers. One option to consider could be assisting a local charity or not-for-profit organisation to connect with your patients that are self-isolating and would benefit from volunteer assistance.

Members may consider providing support to local organisations such as having an arrangement in place so both the patients and the pharmacy can be satisfied that medicines are delivered safely. Consideration for inclusion in an arrangement may include (but not limited to):

Ensuring volunteers are aged 18 years and over

- Have a valid Working With Vulnerable Peoples (WWVP) Card, Police Check or similar
- Understand non-contact delivery protocols to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and protect both the volunteer and patient
- Encourage volunteers to do Infection Control training
<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covid-19-infection-control-training>
- Understand and respect patient confidentiality and privacy
- Pharmacy will ensure all medicines are packed in plain packaging to protect the patient's confidentiality
- High-risk medicines cannot be delivered by volunteers e.g. Schedule 8, S4D, high-cost medicines
- If medicines that require cold chain management can be delivered, and if so precautions the pharmacy will take e.g. provide an esky for transportation
- Other considerations as outlined here:
<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/topic/volunteers>

For further information, please refer to the:

- [Fair Work Ombudsman – Unpaid work](#)
- [Safe Work Australia – Volunteers webpage](#)

Guild members are strongly advised to seek advice from their local Guild branch prior to engaging volunteers.

AUSTRALIA POST HOME DELIVERY

1. Is the Australia Post medicine delivery service the only home delivery service I can use to claim the \$7.77 from PPA online under the Government's COVID-19 Home Medicines Service?

No. The Australia Post home delivery service does not replace the COVID-19 Home Medicines Service. You are not required to use Australia Post for home deliveries. Australia Post is one option that you can consider, or alternatively you can use a courier company, or have your pharmacy staff deliver the medicines to your patients.

Australia Post are offering to deliver via Express Post (parcel up to 500g) for \$7.77, which is the same fee that you can claim from the PPA portal under the COVID-19 Home Medicines Program for eligible patients.

2. How do I register my pharmacy for the Australia Post home delivery service?

Registration information can be found here: [Auspost.com.au/pharmacy-home-deliveries](https://auspost.com.au/pharmacy-home-deliveries)

You first need to register for a MyPost Business account (unless you already have an account).

- a) Australia Post will send you a confirmation email to enable you to activate your account.
- b) You will need to provide further business details, such as your name, pharmacy address. Please ensure you have the 8-digit QR number provided in your confirmation email accessible.
- c) Once you have completed registration, your application will be assessed by Australia Post. Within 2 business days, you should receive confirmation and a Welcome Pack to your email. The Welcome Pack will provide further information on the Australia Post medicine delivery service.

3. What medicines or items can't I post as part of the Australia Post Express Post medicine delivery service?

Schedule 8 medicines cannot be posted via Express Post.

Medicines that have specific storage requirements, such as cold chain items cannot be posted.

Most medicines can be posted, provided the quantity being posted is a reasonable dispense quantity (e.g. one month), the medicines are in their original manufacturers packaging and/or are packaged as per Australia Post Guidelines – please refer to [Australia Post – Dangerous and prohibited goods and packaging guide](#). Sections 10.10, 10.13 and 10.14 specify packaging requirements for tablets, liquids, pastes and powders. Pharmacists may also refer to the [Australia Post – Dangerous Goods Guide](#).

Please note that posting Schedule 8 medicines via Registered Post appears to be acceptable in most States and Territories, please refer to your relevant legislation.

Pharmacists are expected to use their professional judgement as well as consideration of the patient's individual circumstances when determining which medicines would be safe to post to a patient.

4. How do I process a medicine delivery through Australia Post?

All management is done via your MyPost Business account. You can create the order, pay for the shipping costs, print the labels on regular paper directly from your computer to affix onto the package.

To ensure medicine deliveries are prioritised, Australia Post are requesting that the package have the Australia Post green label "Urgent Supplies" affixed to it to enable Australia Post staff to identify medicine packages and prioritise the delivery of these items against other postal items.

5. How do I package a medicine for delivery through Australia Post?

You can order Australia Post satchels or use your own packaging provided it meets the dimension requirements (specified in the Welcome Pack).

The cost of the Australia Post 500g satchel costs \$0.25cents each (\$2.50 for a 10 pack). Australia Post offers a price deal if you purchase a larger quantity.

More information is available here: <https://auspost.com.au/business/shipping/satchels-and-packaging/flat-rate-satchels>

6. What happens if the medicine delivery goes missing?

Australia Post have implemented a number of measures to minimise the risk and ensure medicine deliveries are received by the patient.

This includes requesting that pharmacies affix the green "Urgent Supplies" label to the medicine package" so Australia Post staff are aware that this delivery needs to be prioritised as well as tracking deliveries including the parcel, the relevant post office and Australia Post staff where applicable.

If a medicine does go missing, Australia Post will likely instigate an investigation via the Investigations Team and endeavor to locate and resolve the issue.

7. Australia Post initiated an investigation and have informed me that the medicine delivery could not be found. What do I do now?

Members are advised that under the contractual arrangements that you have entered into between your pharmacy and Australia Post, **Australia Post will only be liable for the cost of supplying the services again or payment of the cost of having the services again.** Please refer to the *Australia Post Terms and Conditions, Clause 66 – Limitation of liability and release and indemnity.*

The arrangement between your pharmacy and Australia Post is governed by 5 documents:

1. The Home Delivery Services Terms and Conditions
2. The Send and Save Terms and Conditions
3. The MyPost Account Terms of Use
4. The Online Sending Terms and Conditions
5. The Australia Post Terms and Conditions

These documents are available here: <https://auspost.com.au/terms-conditions/pharmacy-home-deliveries-terms-and-conditions>

Members are advised to consider the liability, business risks, cost of goods and use professional judgement and consideration of the patient's individual circumstances when determining whether a medicine should be posted. Members should consider if the specific medicines should be posted via Registered Post rather than Express Post as well as if Extra Cover should be purchased, in particular for medicines that cost >\$100.

8. Does Australia Post offer compensation?

The Australia Post Terms and Conditions explains the details of the \$100 compensation included as part of the MyPost Business pharmacy offer which may include to replace or pay the claimant an amount equal to the value of goods. Extra cover to cover the value of the goods for a premium of \$2.50 per \$100 can be purchased.

E.g. if you want to cover the medicines for \$300:

= \$0 (for the first \$100 of included cover) + (2 x \$2.50 for the additional \$200 of cover required)

= \$5 + \$7.77 (<500g Express Post cost)

= \$12.77 total charge by Australia Post

9. What will the 'Postie' do if the patient is not home at time of delivery?

As the Express Post service is not Registered Post, the driver is not expected to ensure that the parcel is delivered to a member of the household. If no one is at home, the parcel may be left in the letterbox or at the doorstep.

Pharmacists are expected to use their professional judgement as well as consideration of the patient's individual circumstances when determining if sending medicines via the Express Post solution is appropriate.

Pharmacies do have the option on MyPost Business to choose "signature on delivery" for an additional \$2.95. If this is purchased, the driver will ensure the patient receives the parcel. In the event they are not home, the parcel will be taken to the Post Office for collection.

Please note that if you are claiming via PPA, under the COVID-19 Home Medicines Service Program Rules, no costs can be passed onto the patient including any additional costs above the \$7.77.

10. Can I post medicines interstate?

The intent of the Australia Post pharmacy offer is to support a pharmacy's usual patients that would normally have their medicines dispensed from that pharmacy however due to COVID-19 are self-isolating at home.

Australia Post have defined Local Catchment Area as *"the geographical area in which Customer's [pharmacy] ordinary customers reside and includes any customers who would ordinarily buy from Customer [pharmacy] in-store"*.

11. Where do I post the medicines?

You can lodge the parcels through a Yellow Street Posting Box (Express Post) or your local Australia Post outlet. If you are lodging the parcel through a Yellow Street Posting Box, you are advised to lodge your parcels **no later than 3pm** Monday to Friday to ensure parcels are collected by Australia Post staff and stored securely overnight.

12. As the packages are posted via Express Post, will my patients receive their medicines the following day?

Next day delivery is not guaranteed. Whilst Australia Post will do their best, and in particular prioritise pharmacy parcels that have the green "Urgent Supplies" affixed to the packaging, Australia Post cannot guarantee delivery timeframes for Next Business Day and Same Day delivery services, particularly during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

13. Can I track the deliveries?

Yes. You can track the deliveries via your MyPost Business account.

14. Where can I seek further information?

The Australia Post Pharmacy Terms and Conditions are available [here](#).

For queries about the Australia Post home delivery service, you can contact Australia Post via pharmacysupport@auspost.com.au