



FACT SHEET

Vital facts on community pharmacy

January - February 2020

Australia's system of community pharmacy and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme are recognised as world-leading.

- There are 5,762 community pharmacies in Australia¹
- On average, every person visits a community pharmacy 18 times each year, in metropolitan, rural and remote locations².
- Community pharmacies are the most frequently accessed and most accessible health destination, with over 456 million individual patient visits annually and the vast majority of pharmacies open after-hours, including weekends³.
- In 2018-19, under the PBS and RPBS, community pharmacies dispensed almost 210 million Government subsidised (Above Co-Pay) prescriptions.⁴
- Pharmacists are one of the most trusted professions along with nurses and doctors. Public opinion surveys have shown that 84% of adults trust the advice they receive from pharmacists.⁵
- 65% of patients say they use one pharmacy for everything or at least one category of product / service. 33% of patients state they were driven by convenience of location⁶.
- More than 94 per cent of pharmacies nationwide have achieved quality accreditation⁷.
- More than 90% of Australian Pharmacies use the Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (ETP) platform of which 4,300 pharmacies use eRx every day⁸.
- As at 30th June 2019, 99.9 per cent of PBS or RPBS prescriptions are now claimed electronically online⁹.

¹ PBS Expenditure and Prescriptions Twelve Months to June 2019: Table 13

² ABS Demographic Statistics, PBS Date of Supply

³ PBS Date of Supply, Guild Digest, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3101.0>

⁴ PBS Expenditure and Prescriptions Twelve Months to June 2018: Table 15(a)

⁵ <https://www.roymorgan.com/findings/7244-roy-morgan-image-of-professions-may-2017-201706051543>

⁶ CP2025_Integrated Market Research Report 2018 – Orima Research

⁷ Quality Care Pharmacy Program

⁸ eRx data; <https://www.erp.com.au/for-pharmacists/>

⁹ <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/sites/default/files/annual-report-191019-v2.pdf>; Page 85



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- In capital cities, 97 per cent of consumers are no further than 2.5 km from a pharmacy. In regional areas, 65 per cent of people are within 2.5 km of a pharmacy¹⁰.
- Six Community Pharmacy Agreements have been negotiated between the Government and the Guild, underpinning pharmacies and the PBS over 25 years.
- The Guild estimates the Government will save \$20 billion through PBS Reforms during the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement¹¹.
- As at 30th September 2019, there were 32,035 registered pharmacists in Australia. 62.8% of pharmacists are women; and over 60% are under 40 years of age¹².
- Pharmacies support public health initiatives such as Opioid Replacement Therapy and needle and syringe programs and participating in the Return of Unwanted Medicines Program improving social, economic and health outcomes.
- Community Pharmacist-Led medication-adherence interventions have improved adherence rates by 9.3% and reduced health system costs by \$1.9 billion.¹³
- In 2017-18 there were 229,080 potentially preventable public hospitalisations and 64,086 private hospitalisations from chronic conditions (excluding diabetes). Medicines adherence is an important role for community pharmacists.¹⁴
- Between June 2016 and May 2017 there were 14.6 million dose administration aids provided by community pharmacies to patients to assist them to remain living at home.¹⁵
- Community pharmacies provide a national network of National Diabetes Services Scheme access points for the 1,324,948 Australians with diabetes registered with the NDSS¹⁶.

Please note – this information is accurate as at 03rd February 2020.

¹⁰ Guild Submission to the Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation 2016

¹¹ Department of Health Portfolio Budget Statements, various

¹² Pharmacy Board of Australia Registrant Data;

¹³ Dovepress Journal – Patient Preference and Adherence: Pharmacist-led medication non-adherence intervention: reducing the economic burden placed on the Australian Health Care system

¹⁴ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Admitted Patient Care 2017-18; Table 8.2

¹⁵ <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/pharmacy-practice-incentives-program-data>

¹⁶ <https://www.ndss.com.au/wp-content/uploads/snapshots/2019/ndss-data-snapshot-201909-all-types-diabetes.pdf>; Data Snapshot – All types of diabetes (Sept 2019)