



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Telehealth prescriptions

What is the relevant legislation for telehealth prescriptions?

The relevant State and Territory Legislation for telehealth can be found [here](#).

Does this arrangement apply to all PBS medicines?

No. Controlled Drugs (Scheduled 8 Medicines) cannot be prescribed in this manner. Nor can medicines listed in Appendix D of the [Poisons Standard](#) or any other medicine required to be in writing under relevant state law. The original paper prescription for these medicines will have to be provided to the pharmacy by the patient (or their agent) or by the prescriber for these medicines to be dispensed and claimed.

Which patients are eligible?

From 1 January 2022, telehealth services introduced in response to COVID-19 will be ongoing. Eligible patients all around Australia will continue to have access to GP, nursing, midwifery and allied health services via telehealth where the health professional deems it clinically appropriate.

For more information, refer to the Australian Government [Fact Sheet](#).

Does the prescriber have to transmit the telehealth (paper) prescription to a pharmacy for dispensing?

No. If the patient prefers to manage having their prescription dispensed, the prescriber can send the original paper prescription (not the digital version) to the patient. Alternatively, the prescriber can issue an electronic prescription using a token or using the patient's Active Script List (ASL).

Does the prescriber have to sign the (paper) prescription before transmitting a copy to the pharmacy?

Yes.

Does the prescriber have to send both the Pharmacist/Patient (paper) copy and the Medicare/DVA copy of the prescription?

Yes.

Does the pharmacist have to print out a copy of the (paper) prescription?

Yes. Processing the telehealth prescription must replicate what is done with a standard paper prescription. The pharmacist will need a copy of the telehealth prescription to attach relevant dispensing labels to retain the correct records, including for any possible compliance activities.

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Must the Repeat Form be attached to a copy of the telehealth (paper) prescription?

Yes.

Must the (paper) prescription repeats be retained by the dispensing pharmacy?

Yes.

Does the prescriber have to send the original paper telehealth prescription to the pharmacy?

No. If the prescriber has transmitted a telehealth (paper) prescription to the pharmacy, the prescriber must retain the original prescription for two years.

Must the pharmacy keep an electronic record of the telehealth prescription?

Yes, complete with all the relevant dispensing labels. Whether electronic or paper, dispensed prescription records must be retained for two years.

Must the telehealth prescription be signed by the patient or agent to certify receipt of the medicines?

There is no requirement for the patient or agent to sign for receipt of a telehealth prescription if it is not practical for them to do so. A pharmacist can sign on behalf of the patient unless it is not practical to do so. The Government recognises that pharmacies may have arrangements in place to manage the risk of COVID transmission in which it is not practical for prescriptions to be signed or annotated.

Must the pharmacy deliver the medicines from a telehealth prescription to the patient?

No. It is expected that the pharmacist and patient will communicate to confirm payment arrangements for the medicines prescribed and to confirm whether the patient or agent will collect from the pharmacy or whether delivery is available.

Note: The Australian Government's COVID-19 Home Medicine Service (HMS) ceased on 30 June 2022.

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