



Harm Minimisation Program Updates

Needle and Syringe Program (NSP)

The Pharmacy Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) is fully funded by the NSW Ministry of Health and aims to reduce the incidence of blood borne viral infections such as Hepatitis C and HIV amongst people who inject drugs.

The NSW Branch of the Guild administers the program on behalf of the Ministry of Health and is responsible for incentive payments to participating pharmacies, promoting harm reduction programs such as NSP and Opioid Substitution Therapy to Community Pharmacies, providing resources and education to pharmacy staff and arranging contractors for services to participating pharmacies.

In mid-October this year, the Guild engaged a new contractor to supply and pick up NSP sharps bins. Prior to this, NSP pharmacies were serviced by various contractors depending on their location. We now have one contractor, Med-X, servicing all NSW NSP Pharmacies. Pharmacies will see a different driver for NSP pick-ups and deliveries. Please make the new driver welcome and advise of any special details pertaining to your pharmacy, for example best times, entry, ring on approach. You may also notice that your NSP sharps bin looks different. Directions for opening and sealing the new bins are printed on the bin. If your pharmacy requires a bin pick-up, please contact our Health Services Program Officer at the branch, email: healthservices@nsw.guild.org.au or phone the Branch on 02 9467 7100.

Please remember that as the NSP is funded by the Ministry of Health for return and disposal of fitpacks only, pharmacies cannot dispose of other sharps (e.g. from diabetic patients or syringes from administered vaccinations in the pharmacy) in the NSP bins. Contact your Local Health District or Council for information on how to dispose of these sharps.

Participating Pharmacies are also reminded to complete their NSP return dockets accurately, including Pharmacy Details, dates From and To, Number and pack size of returned fitpacks and number of extra fitpacks provided under the incentive scheme (Please note the number of extra packs provided cannot exceed the number of fitpacks returned). The summary at the bottom of the docket should always be completed and signed by a pharmacy representative, usually a pharmacist.

Further information and resources are available on the Guild NSW Website in the Professional Services area.

Pharmacies wishing to participate in the program should contact the NSW Branch on 02 9467 7100 or email healthservices@nsw.guild.org.au.

Opioid Substitution Program (OSP) Pharmacy Incentive Scheme (PhIS)

The NSW Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) seeks to reduce the social, economic, and health harms associated with opioid use. This includes the delivery of pharmacotherapy and associated services through various sectors, including community pharmacy.

In NSW, there are currently three types of opioid pharmacotherapy available: methadone, buprenorphine, and buprenorphine-naloxone.

To support community pharmacies in their involvement with the NSW OTP through provision of pharmacotherapy, community pharmacies are able to register to participate in the NSW Pharmacy Incentive Scheme.

The Pharmacy Incentive Scheme is funded by the NSW Ministry of Health, and is administered by The Pharmacy Guild of Australia (NSW Branch).

From 1 July 2018, pharmacies dosing pharmacotherapy through the NSW Opioid Treatment Program are required to lodge a 6-monthly declaration form to The Pharmacy Guild of Australia (NSW Branch). This new form replaces the Methadone/Buprenorphine Pharmacy Incentive Scheme Monthly Return (MPIS 11/12) form, which pharmacies previously lodged with the Pharmaceutical Regulatory Unit.

The new Pharmacy Incentive Scheme Declaration Form requires pharmacies to declare the number of eligible patients being dosed under the NSW Opioid Treatment Program for a minimum of 2 consecutive months during the 6 month reporting period.

The Pharmacy Incentive Scheme reporting periods are:

- 1 May to 31 October
- 1 November to 30 April

The Pharmacy Incentive Scheme Declaration Forms must be submitted within one month of the end of the reporting period, meaning by 30 November and 31 May respectively.

If you have not submitted your first Declaration by 30 November 2018, please email the Health Services Program Officer on healthservices@nsw.guild.org.au as soon as possible for advice on how to proceed.

Pharmacy Incentive Scheme payments will be made for up to 20 patients per reporting period. The new 6-monthly reporting form is available on the NSW Guild website in the Professional Services area.

Identifying and recruiting patients for Medscheck service

Community Pharmacies have a great opportunity to educate and engage with their patients by offering them a Medscheck service. As there is a cap of twenty MedsCheck services per month, it is important to identify patients who will gain benefit from the provision of the service.

The primary aims of the MedsCheck service are to educate patients on their medicines and give them knowledge to better manage their medicines and their health.

It is sometimes difficult to recruit patients for a MedsCheck service, as they can be wary of the offer and may feel that their doctor has everything under control.

A great way to identify and recruit patients is to provide them with a medication profile, for example their Webster or a DAA profile, and ask them to take it home and write, for each medicine, what they are taking it for, how they are taking it and any concerns they have about their medicines or health. Once they have done this, ask them to call the pharmacy to make an appointment to discuss their medicines with the pharmacist.

This approach gives the patient sufficient time to identify what they would like to know about their medicines and makes the recruitment of patients far easier for the pharmacy.

It is also important to ensure that any patient you identify as benefiting from a MedsCheck meets the criteria set out in the 6CPA Guidelines before offering the service.

I would like to thank Guild Life Member, Phil Dibben, for providing these tips on MedsChecks.

