



## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN CHECKLIST – PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS

March 2020

**Note:** A ‘pandemic’ is an epidemic on a global scale. Even a mild pandemic or a severe epidemic is likely to have a significant impact on the health sector and the community.

Community pharmacies must be prepared for pandemics in three ways:

1. As a health destination and part of the health care team to assist people in accordance with recommended pandemic management actions
2. Having arrangements in place to maintain business operations of the pharmacy to ensure continued access to medicines for the community
3. Having alternative arrangements in place should the pharmacy no longer be able to open to ensure continued access to medicines for the community

TO CONSIDER	NOTES	√
<b>Identify sources for reliable information, resources and pandemic updates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Commonwealth Department of Health</li><li>• State and Territory Health Departments</li><li>• Pharmacy Guild website <a href="https://www.guild.org.au/">https://www.guild.org.au/</a></li></ul>		
<b>Are you aware of the State/Territory pandemic plan and how this may impact on pharmacy services?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community pharmacy is a first line health centre and personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks may be provided by Government agencies to assist pharmacy staff.</li><li>• Community pharmacy may be involved in the distribution of critical medicines or other supplies e.g. antivirals.</li></ul>		
<b>Will you be able to maintain a supply of medicines and products of high demand?</b> <p>Australia’s pharmaceutical supply chain generally holds several months of stock based on normal demand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Source information on stock availability from:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Wholesalers</li><li>○ Manufacturers</li><li>○ TBA Medicines Shortages website <a href="https://apps.tga.gov.au/prod/MSI/search">https://apps.tga.gov.au/prod/MSI/search</a></li></ul></li><li>• Transport of supplies may be impacted by quarantine provisions and disruption to the supplier’s own business.</li><li>• Wholesaler ordering arrangements may change:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Delivery schedules may be delayed</li></ul></li></ul>		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Order limits may apply to mitigate against national shortages</li> <li>● Manage pharmacy supplies without stockpiling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Excessive pharmacy orders risk precipitating stock shortages</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Manage panic stockpiling by patients which could precipitate or exacerbate prescription and OTC shortages – dispensing multiple repeats must be consistent with State, Territory and Commonwealth laws and Pharmacy Board guidance</li> <li>● Report shortages to <a href="mailto:medicine.shortages@health.gov.au">medicine.shortages@health.gov.au</a></li> </ul>		
<p><b>Will you provide PPE for staff?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Determine the clinical and/or Work Health and Safety (WHS) requirements for provision of appropriate PPE for staff use under the guidance provided by government or other relevant agencies.</li> <li>● Determine how you source PPE (Government may recognise community pharmacy as an essential service and supply PPE).</li> <li>● Ensure staff know how to use and dispose of PPE.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Where a vaccine is available, promote uptake, including for staff and vulnerable patients (e.g. seasonal influenza vaccination).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider vaccinating staff.</li> <li>● Determine how to communicate with the local community.</li> <li>● Consider service models for maximising community uptake that account for pandemic restrictions e.g. after-hours or outreach clinics, where permitted.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Determine which staff will need to be involved in the various operations?</b></p> <p>The pharmacy may change routine operations and staff roles to accommodate pandemic-specific activities according to how the pandemic evolves.</p> <p>Determine, for example, if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Specific arrangements need to be put in place if a staff member is considered to be in a high-risk patient group.</li> <li>● Specific pharmacists may be directed to vaccinating patients, dispensing antivirals, triaging patients.</li> <li>● Specific pharmacy assistants may be directed to managing stock of pandemic-related products.</li> <li>● Specific staff may be directed to home or clinic deliveries.</li> <li>● Specific staff may be directed to managing customer entry to the pharmacy.</li> <li>● Specific staff may be directed to communicating with patients, local doctors and other health care professionals, hospitals.</li> <li>● Specific staff may be directed to routinely disinfect surfaces at regular intervals</li> </ul>		

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<p><b>Determine what services will be continued and what will be suspended.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify core business activities, staffing and skills.</li> <li>• Determine if you need to alter your operating hours, and if so, how this will be communicated.</li> <li>• Determine what non-essential services will you suspend or cease.</li> <li>• Determine any changes to how essential services are managed e.g. Opioid Dependence Treatment services; Staged Supply services; Residential Aged Care contracts; Prison Supply contracts</li> <li>• Ensure you have contingency plans for essential services if these cannot be maintained.</li> <li>• Identify vulnerable patient groups and any special arrangements needed to manage these groups, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In-store services (e.g. isolating from other customers and staff)</li> <li>○ Community services e.g. home delivery</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<p><b>How will you manage people in the pharmacy?</b></p> <p>Measures to minimise transmission of the virus may be required including restriction on patient numbers or patient movement around the pharmacy.</p> <p>In addition, if pharmacy staffing levels are affected, there may be a limit on how many customers can enter the pharmacy at a time to manage security and enable the pharmacists' on-duty to reasonably attend to patient needs and to further minimise transmission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decide if there are any changes for how patients will enter, move through and leave the pharmacy during a pandemic.</li> <li>• Determine any limits in the number of patients in the premises at any one time to minimise spread and assist with pharmacy security.</li> <li>• Consider having patients leave prescriptions and repeats on file and to phone ahead or use prescription management apps to request a prescription be dispensed for collection or delivery.</li> <li>• Determine if there is a need to avoid handling cash and operating only on accounts or card transactions.</li> <li>• Determine if the pharmacist will sign prescriptions declaring supply made during pandemic.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>How will you manage patients experiencing symptoms?</b></p> <p>People may present to or call the pharmacy with symptoms and seeking treatment or advice. Attendance to the pharmacy may be accompanied by another person e.g. carer or family member.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine arrangements for staff protection, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Signage at entrance redirecting symptomatic patients before they enter, or calling pharmacy from outside rather than entering premise</li> <li>○ Immediate referral and attention by pharmacist</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use of PPE for pharmacist, patient and carer</li> <li>○ Isolation of patient/carer in a consultation room or cordoned off area</li> <li>○ Decontamination after attending to the patient</li> <li>● Identify referral arrangements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Check if local GP clinics are prepared to accept people triaged by the pharmacist and if so, what the arrangements are (e.g. masking patient; directing to specific person at clinic).</li> <li>○ Check if there are special arrangements for patients to attend local hospital/ED, or specialised clinic, and if so, what the arrangements are (e.g. masking patient; directing to a special person or area).</li> <li>○ Consider transport arrangements for patient to reduce risk of transmission (e.g. use of ambulance if patient uses public transport).</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Determine what information is provided to people that call the pharmacy for advice.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Identify when you will choose to close and what alternative arrangements need to be made?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Determine your trigger for suspending operation of the pharmacy (e.g. minimum staffing levels, stock delivery interruptions).</li> <li>● Confirm contingency arrangements for patients. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Alternative pharmacies available for dispensing and general pharmacy supplies.</li> <li>○ Management of patients with special supply needs –ODT and staged supply patients, residential aged care facility patients; prison patients.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Identify signage directing patients to other health support.</li> <li>● Determine which local providers need to be informed e.g. other local pharmacies, GP clinics, hospital, community health centre, opioid dependence clinics, aged care facilities.</li> <li>● Identify security measures while the pharmacy is closed.</li> <li>● Confirm staff and wage arrangements while the pharmacy is closed.</li> <li>● Determine how staff, patients and other providers will be alerted when pharmacy is re-opening.</li> </ul>		