

Continuation of Pharmacy Programmes and Services

What will the measure do?

Previous Community Pharmacy Agreements have recognised a range of professional programmes and services that can be delivered by community pharmacy and pharmacists to support consumers. Under the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement (6CPA), the measure will support this continued investment through providing up to \$613 million to:

- deliver services which support medication management and adherence, such as Home Medicines Reviews and Dose Administration Aids;
- support programmes which improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and people in rural and remote Australia;
- continue to support an accessible and robust rural pharmacy workforce; and
- support initiatives which drive the use of electronic health, and through this enable medication information to be included as part of personally-controlled electronic health records.

In addition, the 6CPA will require that all continuing programmes be evaluated for clinical and cost-effectiveness, to ensure they are based on sound clinical evidence and offer the most cost-effective interventions for consumers. This will ensure all programmes which are delivered through pharmacy and by pharmacists are assessed to the same level of evidence and standards as for all other professions.

These assessments will be undertaken by an independent health technology assessment committee, such as the Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC), to be determined by the Minister, and will inform how to best target investment in evidence-based services delivered by pharmacy and pharmacists in the future (refer to the fact sheet *Cost-Effectiveness Assessment of Pharmacy Programmes and Services*).

As part of this investment in programmes and services, the Government and the Guild have jointly agreed to look at ways of improving access to pharmacy services for all Australians (such as through increasing opening hours and the reach of services where appropriate).

What is the impact?

This measure ensures that patients can receive services through pharmacy and by pharmacists which improve their health outcomes and offer value to the Australian community. During the first year of the 6CPA, a number of programmes will continue at current funding levels while these assessments are undertaken. Any changes to programme arrangements will be informed by recommendations made by independent assessment groups, and will inform ongoing levels of investment in the future.