

Extension of Existing Pharmacy Location Rules

What will the measure do?

From 1 July 2015, the Commonwealth will extend the Pharmacy Location Rules (Location Rules) to 30 June 2020 (a further five years).

The Location Rules are a regulatory tool intended to support the geographical distribution of community pharmacies from which people can access Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medicines. The Location Rules set out location based criteria that regulate the establishment of new pharmacies and the relocation of existing pharmacies approved to supply Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme (PBS) medicines under section 90 of the *National Health Act 1953* (the Act).

The Location Rules are made as a Ministerial Determination and their extension is covered by Section 99(Y) of the Act.

While the Location Rules will be retained for the duration of the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement (6CPA), it is important to ensure their effectiveness is assessed in how they support access to timely and affordable PBS medicines for all Australians. For this reason, within the first two years of the 6CPA a public review, conducted by an independent reviewer, will be undertaken (refer to the fact sheet *A Comprehensive Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation*).

What is the impact?

Retention of the Location Rules will continue to ensure all Australians continue to have access to medicines subsidised via the PBS, while the Comprehensive Review is undertaken.