



Three things you need to know about Pharmaceutical Reform

1. Remember to bring your Medicare card to hospital (and a concession card if you have one).
2. You will now get up to a month's supply of medication on discharge from hospital or when you attend as an outpatient.
3. The medicine you receive will cost you about the same as it would at your local chemist.

The reforms will improve your level of care as you move from the hospital back into the community. Getting the medicine you need will now be safer, easier and more convenient.

For more information on PBS and the Safety Net, please contact:

FREE CALL 1800 020 613

TTY 1800 552 152 (hearing impaired)

TIS 131 450 (Translating and Interpreting Service)

EMAIL pbs.enq@hic.gov.au

INTERNET www.hic.gov.au

For more information on Pharmaceutical Reform in Victoria:

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.health.vic.gov.au/pbsreform

TELEPHONE (03) 9616 8673

**If you have any questions,
please see your hospital pharmacist.**



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Pharmaceutical Reform

**IMPROVING THE TRANSITION
FROM HOSPITAL TO HOME**



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The Commonwealth and Victoria are working together to improve the way patients get their medication by bringing the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) to public hospitals.

This change is designed to make it safer and easier for all public hospital patients to get the medication that they need, when they need it.

The Old System

Previously, most patients discharged from public hospitals were given two to seven days of medication. They would then need to visit their local doctor within this time to obtain a PBS prescription for further medications.

The New System

Under the new system, you can receive up to a month's supply of medication when you are discharged and when you attend a public hospital as an outpatient.

Improving Your Care

As part of these reforms, hospitals will implement strategies to ensure patients leave hospital with a better understanding of the medicines they are taking. A list of the patient's medications will also be sent to their usual doctor before their next visit. This means that your doctor will have up-to-date information about your hospital treatment and medications, improving your overall care.



Choice and Convenience

Before leaving hospital, you will be given a prescription that can be dispensed in either the hospital pharmacy or your local community pharmacy. So, if it is more convenient for you, and your hospital doctor thinks it appropriate, you can choose to get your medicines from your local chemist.

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

The PBS was developed by the Commonwealth Government to ensure all Australian residents and eligible visitors have access to necessary and life-saving medicines at an affordable price.

Most medicines that doctors prescribe are listed on the PBS. Many of them cost much more than the price you pay—some hundreds of dollars—but the Government provides a subsidy so that you pay much less.

The amount you pay—the copayment—is set by the Commonwealth Government. See the insert for this year's copayment and safety net details.

If you hold a card issued by Centrelink, the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) or a Safety Net card, you are entitled to an additional Government subsidy.

When you receive medication on discharge or as an outpatient you will need to show your Medicare card or to have had its number recorded when you were admitted to hospital to prove you are eligible for the PBS subsidy. For additional subsidy, you will need your Centrelink concession card, Veteran's Repatriation Health card or Safety Net card.

Using the Safety Net

If you or your family need a lot of medicines in a calendar year, there is a Safety Net to help protect you financially. Pharmacists can give you a copy of the form on which you record your medicines. Once you or your family reach the Safety Net threshold, you can apply for a Safety Net Card and your PBS medicines will be cheaper or free for the rest of the year.

A family can include:

- A spouse or de facto spouse
- Children under 16 in your care
- Full-time dependent students under 25.

Joint Safety Net: Public hospitals have a special arrangement that allows them to add non-PBS items to your Safety Net card up to the copayment amount. This scheme is only available if your medicines are dispensed in the hospital.

