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| Community Pharmacist Statewide Pilot |
| Frequently Asked Questions |
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# Consumer FAQ

## What is the purpose of the Victoria Community Pharmacist Pilot (the pilot)?

The pilot aims to test a new model of primary health care, delivered through community pharmacies, to improve timely access to common, low risk medications. This might especially benefit women and those living in areas where it is hard to get a general practitioner (GP) appointment. It also aims to ease pressure on GPs so that they can focus on providing more complex care.

## What treatments can be provided under the pilot?

Under the pilot, community pharmacists will provide:

* continued supply of select oral contraceptive pills without a prescription for women
* Selected treatments for some mild skin conditions
* Selected antibiotics for uncomplicated urinary tract infections (UTIs) in women.

Participating community [pharmacist immunisers](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/pharmacist-immunisers) will be able to administer select travel and other vaccines.

## How were the treatments that can be provided under the pilot selected?

The treatments included in the pilot were chosen to align with similar pilots in Queensland and New South Wales, as well as other established community pharmacist programs worldwide.

The treatments selected are low risk medications commonly prescribed as part of routine, high-volume primary care.

For example, UTIs are the third most common human infection in women; oral contraceptives are the most used method of birth control in Australia among women; and mild skin conditions are common amongst Victorians.

## Will my local pharmacy be part of this pilot?

While the pilot is available to pharmacies throughout Victoria, individual pharmacies can choose whether to participate.

Pharmacists, pharmacy owners and pharmacy premises will need to meet strict eligibility criteria to be able to participate in the pilot.

Information about which community pharmacies are participating in the pilot will be available on this webpage once the pilot commences.

## Will pharmacists at my participating local pharmacy be appropriately trained to prescribe me medication and/or administer my vaccine?

All registered pharmacistsundertake extensive study **in** all aspects of medicines as part of undergraduate studies.

Community pharmacists will be required to complete further training to participate in the pilot, to ensure they can safely provide the approved medications under the pilot, and provide pre-travel healthcare, including vaccination services.

## Will the pharmacist share information about the treatment provided under the Pilot with my GP?

Where there is consent from you to do so, the pharmacist will inform your regular GP and/or your general practice of the consultation and the treatment.

My Health Record will be updated with the treatments where relevant and if there is appropriate consent.

## I have complex health needs – will my pharmacy be able to assist me under the pilot?

Community pharmacists will follow detailed protocols to ensure the right treatment is provided in the right place with the right health practitioner. The pilot will focus on lower complexity treatments/medications for individuals with uncomplicated healthcare needs.

If an individual requires more complex care, pharmacists will refer you back to your GP or general practice.

## What are the costs for me to receive services as part of the pilot?

Under the pilot there will be no charge for you to see the pharmacist to receive care under the Pilot.

The cost of the medications if you need them, would be no more than if you were to get an equivalent prescription from your GP.

# Pharmacy FAQ

## What is the purpose of the Victorian Community Pharmacist Statewide Pilot (the pilot)?

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## What does the pilot’s ‘structured prescribing’ arrangement mean for community pharmacists?

Having a structured prescribing arrangement in place will provide participating community pharmacists with a limited authorisation to dispense, administer, supply and sell certain Schedule 4 ‘prescription only’ medications without a prescription from a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner. This must be done according to an established guideline, protocol or standing order. It is lower risk compared to ‘autonomous prescribing’ and requires less comprehensive training.

This structured prescribing arrangement is consistent with that of the current New South Wales Pharmacy Trial and completed Queensland Urinary Tract Infection Pharmacy Pilot.

## What will happen if someone who does not meet the eligibility criteria seeks treatment under the Pilot?

People who seek treatment from a community pharmacist under the pilot but who do not meet the eligibility criteria will be referred to an appropriate health practitioner, such as their GP.

Relevant referral pathways will be considered by the Pilot’s Clinical Reference Group and included in the clinical protocols for the Pilot.

## How can pharmacy owners and/or community pharmacists participate in the pilot?

Participation in the pilot will be on an “opt-in” basis, with pharmacists submitting an expression of interest via a registration portal. Pharmacy owners, pharmacy premises and the pharmacists providing care at the pharmacy under the Pilot will need to meet documented eligibility criteria to be able to participate in the Pilot.

More information on the eligibility criteria and how to submit an expression of interest will be available soon. The expression of interest process for pharmacies to join the pilot will open in September.

## What eligibility criteria must community pharmacies and registered pharmacists meet to be able to participate in the pilot?

Pharmacies will need to meet eligibility criteria regarding licensing and premises, and pharmacists will also have to meet specific criteria.

More information will be provided prior to commencement of the expression of interest process.

## How will participating pharmacies be reimbursed for the associated costs of the pilot?

Under the pilot, community pharmacies will receive $20 from the Victorian Government for each patient consultation conducted to assess whether the patient needs in-scope healthcare. This payment is unique to the Victorian pilot and covers increased time and administration to undertake patient consultations and collect data.

Community pharmacists will also be reimbursed for any Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Gaps in the medicines dispensed, and this will vary depending on the medication. This will ensure the cost to pharmacies for these medications will be the same as the cost under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

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