

Private Remunerated Professional Pharmacy Services



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ALMOST EVERY PHARMACY INDUSTRY COMMENTATOR STRESSES THE IMPORTANCE OF MOVING INTO PROFESSIONAL PHARMACY SERVICES. WHILE THE FOCUS OF THE MESSAGE IS PRIMARILY ON 6CPA PROGRAMS, THERE ARE NUMEROUS PRIVATE PROGRAMS THAT SHOULD BE THE FOCUS OF EVERY PHARMACY. THERE ARE PRIVATE REMUNERATED PROFESSIONAL PHARMACY PROGRAMS DEVELOPED BY THIRD PARTIES, AND THAT IS WHERE PHARMAPROGRAMS COMES INTO PLAY.

PharmaPrograms' initiatives are IT-enabled programs where the pharmaceutical industry partners develop powerful patient health solutions — through PharmaPrograms. Patient support programs assist patients to achieve better medication compliance and persistence. These programs are not new and indeed have been in existence for decades. What is new is ensuring pharmacists play a key remunerated role in this process. PharmaPrograms set protocols for each program, and the IT system enables the pharmacist to deliver a streamlined service.

Our goal is to create value for patients in a variety of ways:

- Access to prescription medications prior to PBS listing;
- Establish a viable and affordable private prescription market;
- Facilitate additional treatment options to support their medication regime;
- Establish simplified professional programs to enhance the patient treatment experience;

- Facilitate Quality Use of Medicines (QUM) initiatives to improve medication adherence and persistence.

These national programs are tailored solutions. Some involve doctors recommending services to patients, and the local pharmacy facilitates a specific program. Doctors are happy to recommend the service because they know exactly what the protocol contains and they know it is within the scope of practice of pharmacists. Patient support programs and patient familiarisation programs are not new, but the valuable role that a pharmacist can play has been ignored in the past — indeed, community pharmacy was bypassed in most programs. At PharmaPrograms we believe the pharmacist has a key role. With many chronic therapy medicines, perhaps with five repeats, the pharmacist sees the patient six times for the one time that they consult with their local doctor. There is no possible way that medication compliance and medication persistence can be maximised without the pharmacist playing an important clinical role.

Many pharmaceutical manufacturers required bespoke solutions and with therapy becoming more complex with the next biosimilars entering the market, this area of practice will grow significantly. We build an IT-enabled process to deliver a specific protocol. We respect that pharmacists are busy health professionals and need to integrate systems into their existing workload. PharmaPrograms was born out of this process where now 4400 pharmacies have enrolled in at least one program, 86 pharmacy groups have adopted the programs and 4300 doctors are participating. As program architect I can assure pharmacist colleagues we have designed programs with their issues front of mind. The \$1 million that has been paid to pharmacies to date is a bonus.

HOW DOES PHARMAPROGRAMS WORK?

The aim of each medication-specific program is to establish a national network of pharmacies to support patients to ensure better compliance with their medication,

timely access to information and services. This national network is promoted to doctors and patients as the Network Pharmacies. A pharmacy must first register for a specific medication-based Pharmacy Program and then they must agree with the Terms and Conditions of the program. Network Pharmacies are informed of new programs as they come on board, and in the 18 months since launch, 5 programs have been brought to the market. Registration will occur online at www.pharmaprograms.com.au.

Pharmacies are provided resources (hard copy Kits and online resources) for tailored Pharmacy Programs. There is a web portal, which is not for public viewing, and which requires a general Username and Password to access. Pharmacies complete all necessary details on the Program Registration eForm and the Pharmacy ID will be emailed to you. The resources page on the site has been set up to assist pharmacists, and as updated versions of documents are created, they will be located here. Once set up, as patients present prescriptions for that medicine the

Protocol for the program is triggered. As part of the service, the pharmacist completes some online eForms and the patient is provided some information through a tailored one-page leaflet. Pharmacies are remunerated for these professional services with the amount depending on the rigor of the program. Doctors and patients are then informed about your pharmacy's participation in the program via a pharmacy locator where prescribers can assist patients to locate a Network Pharmacy.

ARE PHARMACIES PAID FOR THE SERVICE?

Pharmacies are paid a professional fee for delivering a program according to the protocol and this is above and beyond their normal remuneration for dispensing the medicine. While each program is different, there is generally a key quality use of medicines (QUM) component that the pharmacist needs to deliver. Those messages differ depending on which repeat is being dispensed. The IT systems assist the pharmacist to know which service to provide and the printed

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material received by the patient is labelled with the pharmacy's details, ensuring that the patient knows it is the pharmacist who was providing the service. Unlike other programs that refer patients to particular websites or printed resources, we utilise the skills of the pharmacist to deliver the key messages. This is critical for better outcomes because it overcomes any language or communications difficulties that the patient may be experiencing. It is the pharmacist who can pitch the key QUM message and tailor that message to the patient to maximise concordance.

We have a dedicated website and indeed through this portal, pharmacists make their claims for payment in an automated fashion. The site also houses all program collateral which supports pharmacists in implementing the programs.

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