

Electronic prescribing

Electronic prescribing allows healthcare providers and consumers to use an electronic prescription as an alternative to paper prescriptions. It forms part of an Australian Government budget measure to make the PBS more efficient.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ELECTRONIC PRESCRIBING?

Electronic prescribing:

- Provides greater choice for patients.
- Improves patient safety by reducing the risk of transcription errors.
- Makes prescribing and dispensing medicines more efficient.
- Supports electronic medication charts in hospitals and residential aged care facilities.
- Removes the need for handling and storing a physical paper prescription.
- Supports digital health services such as telehealth services to ensure continuity of patient care.
- Provides an opportunity to protect community members and health care providers from exposure to infectious diseases (for example, COVID-19).
- Maintains patient privacy and integrity of personal information.

HOW DOES ELECTRONIC PRESCRIBING WORK?

Electronic prescriptions are available nationally as a “token” or an Active Script List.

Token Model

During a consultation, a doctor can send an electronic prescription (with a QR code) to their patient as an SMS or email.

The patient can then visit a pharmacy or have the token sent to the pharmacy. If the patient has a repeat(s), a new SMS or email will be generated and sent to the patient when they get their medication from the pharmacy. As with paper prescriptions, the patient must retain the new token to fill their next prescription. If needed, the patient can forward the SMS or email to a family member or carer so they can collect their medicine.

Active Script List

An Active Script List (ASL) allows a patient to manage their active electronic prescriptions without a token. It is a model that helps patients who are taking multiple medications. Having a trusted relationship with a doctor and pharmacist means they can use the ASL to help their patient manage their medicines more easily.

How it works:

The patient needs to visit a pharmacy to set up their list.

If the GP needs to prescribe medicine, a patient can choose an electronic prescription and it will be automatically added to their list, unless they ask their doctor not to add it. A patient can still get an SMS or email as well.

The patient can go to their pharmacy, forward the SMS or email to them or call them to validate their ID so that they can access their list and collect their medicine.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

For further information about electronic prescribing or electronic prescriptions, scan the QR code above or contact:

The Australian Digital Health Agency
1300 901 001 8am – 5pm (AEST/AEDT)
Monday – Friday



Scan for more
information and
resources