

Reducing the cost of medicines

Increasing the maximum dispensing quantity

The Government will support more than 300 Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme medicines to be dispensed in greater amounts, phased in from 1 September 2023. Some patients will be able to get 2 months' worth of the medicine they need for a stable, chronic health condition, cutting the number of visits to a pharmacy and GP each year and saving \$1.6 billion in out-of-pocket costs over 4 years.

General patients will be able to save up to \$180 a year per medicine if prescribed for 60 days, and concession card holders up to \$43.80 a year per medicine.

For at least 6 million Australians this will cut the cost of medicines by up to half and will come on top of the \$12.50 decrease in the PBS co-payment for general scripts that came in on 1 January 2023.

Supporting pharmacies

The Government will support regional and remote pharmacies by investing \$79.5 million over 4 years to double the Regional Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance. This funding supports the continued operation of around 1,093 community pharmacies in regional and rural Australia.

Pharmacists will also be funded to deliver vaccines to eligible patients under the National Immunisation Program, with an investment of \$114.1 million over 4 years.

Improving access to new medicines (new PBS listings)

The Government is providing \$2.2 billion over 5 years for new and amended listings to the PBS, including treatment for cystic fibrosis. A further \$449.4 million is also provided for new and amended listings to the National Immunisation Program.

William has a heart condition that increases his risk of developing a stroke, so he takes apixaban twice daily. William's partner Sandra has inflammatory bowel disease and takes the anti-inflammatory medicine sulfasalazine each day. William and Sandra pay \$30 per script as general (non-concessional) patients for these PBS medicines. Their GP considers their conditions are stable and they can safely get 2 months' supply of their medicines at a time. Now, they only need to go to the pharmacy every second month and see their GP once a year to manage their conditions, saving William and Sandra up to \$360 a year in PBS co-payments for their medicines.

