



Pharmacy innovations in digital health (eHealth)

Community pharmacists are the custodians of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and play a vital role in the primary health care of all Australians.

Use of medicines by older Australians

Community pharmacy in Australia leads the way in its willingness to adopt innovative technologies and strategies in its mission to offer the highest standard of pharmacy and health care services.

Whether those innovations are technological, systematic or strategic in nature, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia has developed the necessary infrastructure and culture to implement innovation in such a way as to efficiently deliver significant benefits to the Australian public.

In the area of digital health (eHealth), no other profession has done more than community pharmacy in terms of investing its own funds to support moves to the digital health (eHealth) model. Key examples are outlined below.

Find-a-Pharmacy: Helping patients *find the pharmacy services they need*

- In early 2008, the Pharmacy Guild launched its pharmacy locator service findapharmacy.com.au
- Now patients are able to locate pharmacy premises, view opening hours, see what services are provided and even find out which languages are spoken within a pharmacy.
- The findapharmacy.com.au service enables patients to print out a map and driving instructions from their front door to the pharmacy. This is particularly useful for travellers who are seeking a pharmacy while on the road.
- The data contained on this site may one day contribute to the various services included in an Electronic Health Record, and is another example of community pharmacy preparing for a multitude of forthcoming digital health (eHealth) services.

PBS Online: pharmacy shows its strength and ability in embracing IT

Online Claiming for Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medicines offers an improved claiming solution by allowing pharmacies to submit a claim to Medicare each time a PBS medicine is dispensed.

Online Claiming for PBS was piloted by a small number of pharmacies in 2004 and was followed by an independent evaluation. Medicare implemented the recommendations of the evaluation report and rolled out Online Claiming for PBS to the wider pharmacy community.

- Over 99 per cent of pharmacies utilise PBS online on a daily basis.
- Rollout went from four per cent of pharmacies to over 95 per cent of pharmacies within nine months of the Guild indicating to members that it was robust and workable and that an adequate financial incentive was available.

- PBS Online is a testament to the willingness and ability of community pharmacy to embrace new technologies where the Guild and dispensing software vendors are actively involved in their design and where appropriate remuneration is provided.

National digital health (eHealth) Record System

The Guild supports the concept of an electronic health record and has invested significant time and financial resources to see such a system become a reality. The Guild will continue to work towards an electronic health record that promotes the use of a multi-channel health care engagement model for pharmacy and patients while providing a clinical information and support system for pharmacists to deliver optimal patient care.

Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (ETP)

Community pharmacy has consistently looked for ways to utilise technology to improve patient care and safety in the area of medication management. With over two hundred million prescriptions dispensed every year in Australia, and pharmacists dispensing on average 100 to 200 scripts a day, electronic prescriptions provide a significant opportunity to strengthen patient safety and confidence in dispensing medication. To register with a PES, a pharmacy is required to have a compatible pharmacy dispensing system. The pharmacy dispensing system may dictate which PES a pharmacy registers with, as not all systems are integrated with a PES.

PES Interoperability

An important part of making ETP work is to ensure that all electronic prescriptions barcodes can be read regardless of the dispense system or ETP provider a pharmacy uses. This means that all electronic prescription barcodes from ETP-enabled pharmacies (irrespective of which PES system holds the electronic prescription or associated electronic repeat authorisation) will allow the scanning of the prescription details and thus be interoperable.

eRx Script Exchange

eRx Script Exchange is an industry-driven partnership focused on Electronic Transfer of Prescriptions (ETP). Endorsed by the Guild and led by Australia's largest pharmacy software specialist Fred Health, it brings together expertise in the needs of patients, pharmacists, GPs and medical practitioners, and digital health (eHealth).



Patients benefiting from eRx Script Exchange:

- Electronic prescribing strengthens patient safety and confidence, through greater accuracy of dispensing and reducing risks
- A better experience for patients, as a result of improving management of patient care between GPs and pharmacies
- It preserves patient choice, ensuring that the patient can go to any pharmacy for dispensing
- It creates a better experience for patients in the pharmacy, as electronic prescriptions are more efficient and accurate to dispense.

National Medicines Repository

As part of its commitment to the make best use of technology, the Guild supported the establishment and successful trial of a medicines repository (the MedView project) designed to improve patient health outcomes by giving healthcare providers the ability to view a combined record of prescribed and dispensed medications for patients across community, hospital and aged care settings.

The MedView project showed the simplicity in capturing existing prescription and prescribing events via electronic scripts and making this knowledge instantly available to clinician's to improve health outcomes. MedView played a key part of developing national electronic health infrastructure and the Australian Government's national digital health (eHealth) strategy and is currently being expanded as the National Prescription and Dispense Repository (NPDR).

MedView (v.2)

Medicines Workspace

Whether a patient is going in for day surgery, visiting a new specialist, or having a regular checkup, this combined record of prescribed and dispensed medications for patients delivered through the MedView Medicines Workspace that will provide an integrated electronic health record online system in which health professionals are able to access consenting patients' consolidated medication history from hospitals, pharmacies, general practitioners and other healthcare professionals. Patients will also be able to access their own consolidated health records via an online portal.

The MedView Medicines Workspace has the potential to deliver significant benefits such as:

- Clinical improvements by utilising accurate and timely information flow
- Supporting a range of patient-care events such as emergency room presentations and support 'at risk' patient monitoring regarding the oversupply and undersupply of medications
- Providing a backup audit and risk procedures capability for the appropriate professional and government authorities who regulate health professionals and provide payment subsidies

- The development of a national medication repository which includes all medication events recorded and shared would provide a high value quick win in e-health within Australia which would benefit all Australians particularly those at high risk of medication misadventure

Telehealth

CP2GP

The Community Pharmacy to General Practice (CP2GP) initiative is a collaboration with Telstra Health to provide Guild member pharmacies with enhanced capabilities to facilitate patient access to GP care.

CP2GP utilises two key Telstra Health innovative solutions:

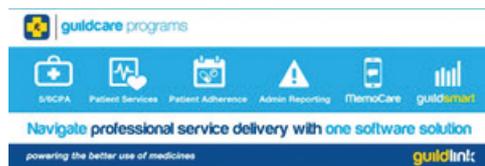
1. HealthEngine® - Australia's largest GP booking system, and
2. ReadyCare® - Australia's first purpose-built 24/7 GP telemedicine service.

CP2GP aims to provide a complementary GP service in times of need, and not as a substitute or replacement for regular GP care.

CP2GP supports continuity of care by encouraging patients accessing ReadyCare® to agree to a care summary being sent to their regular GP.

GuildCare Programs: Patient support through IT solutions

The GuildCare suite of programs is designed to assist pharmacists in the delivery of professional services and support, including medication management programs, compliance and adherence programs. Through the electronic recording and delivery of these services, GuildCare aims to help pharmacists ensure that patients are maximising the benefits from their medications.



The Pharmacy Guild of Australia is the national peak body representing community pharmacy. It serves the interests of its members and supports community pharmacy in its role delivering quality health outcomes to all Australians.

For further information contact:

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia
 Phone: 02 6270 1888
 Fax: 02 6270 1800
 Email: guild.nat@guild.org.au
 Lvl 2 15 National Circuit, Barton, ACT 2600 Australia
 PO Box 310, Fyshwick ACT 2609 Australia