



**The Hon Greg Hunt MP**  
**Minister for Health**  
**Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service & Cabinet**

19 March 2020

**An open letter to the Community Pharmacy Sector**

Dear pharmacists and community pharmacy staff,

Let me start by thanking you for your extraordinary dedication and service to the Australian community.

The stresses and strains are real. The Prime Minister, myself and the whole Cabinet have seen the immense work being undertaken under extreme pressure. Many of you are working around the clock, literally, to ensure that critical medicines and health advice is available for those who need it most. We could not be more appreciative or thankful.

We have heard your concerns and have now enacted measures to minimise the impacts of panic buying and potential for medicine shortages. In order to ensure equitable access to medicines for all Australians we will be requiring community pharmacists to enforce new limits on dispensing and sales of prescription and over-the-counter medicines.

Measures include:

- Pharmacists will be required to limit dispensing of certain prescription products to 1 month's supply at the prescribed dose, and sales of certain over-the-counter medicines to a maximum of one unit per purchase;
- In addition, pharmacists will be strongly encouraged to limit dispensing and sales of all other medicines to one month's supply or one unit;
- Some over-the-counter medicines for which there has been particularly high demand will be subject to **new controls on the supply of these medicines**: such as placing some front of shop medicines behind the counter to assist in allocating supply equitably.

These measures have been developed in collaboration with the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia, Pharmaceutical wholesalers and the broader medicines and healthcare sector over recent days.

We will continue to work collaboratively with your representatives to identify if more measures are necessary and in this context I am grateful for the support and leadership of the entire community pharmacy sector.

We are entering times of profound health, economic and social challenge. In short, I simply want to say thank you for your work and dedication. It is now the work of our lives - and in so doing you are all helping to save lives and protect lives.

I thank you for all you have done so far and I thank you for all that each of you will do to help in the coming weeks and months.

As we support the country, can I equally urge each of you to support each other.

Take care and let us together do all we can to care for each other.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Hunt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Greg" and the last name "Hunt" clearly distinguishable.

**Hon Greg Hunt MP**