



Your medicines, your pharmacist

*A guide for autistic people, their families,
supporters and pharmacists*

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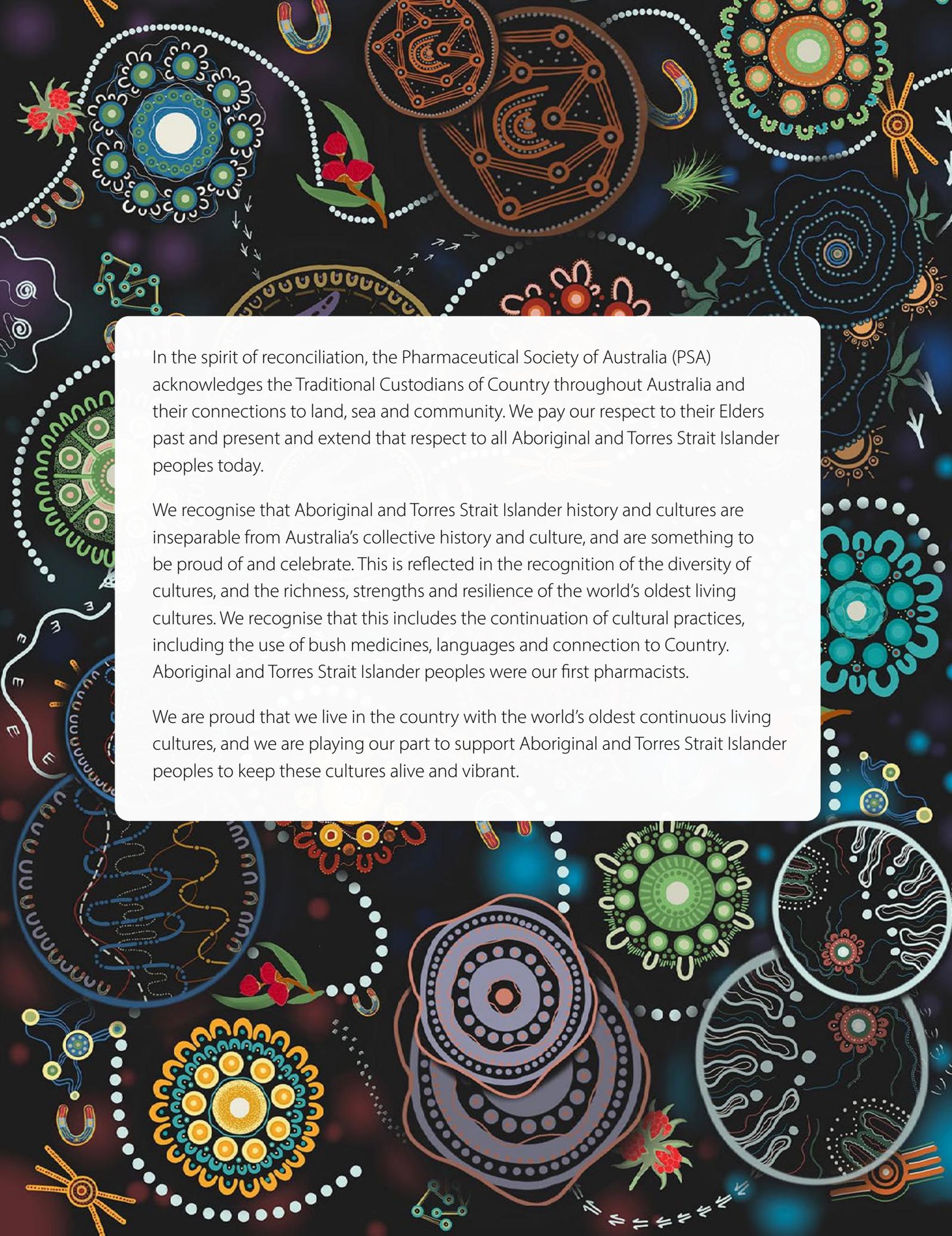
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In the spirit of reconciliation, the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and cultures are inseparable from Australia's collective history and culture, and are something to be proud of and celebrate. This is reflected in the recognition of the diversity of cultures, and the richness, strengths and resilience of the world's oldest living cultures. We recognise that this includes the continuation of cultural practices, including the use of bush medicines, languages and connection to Country. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were our first pharmacists.

We are proud that we live in the country with the world's oldest continuous living cultures, and we are playing our part to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to keep these cultures alive and vibrant.



How to Use This Guide

- **Low Energy/Urgent?** Start with the **Quick Start Guide** 4
- **Going to the Pharmacy now?** Skip to the **Communication Tool** 54
- **Looking for a specific service?** Match the color of the section below to the page tabs.



Quick Start: The Essentials

- **What is this?** A tool to help you navigate Australian pharmacies with less stress.
- **Private area:** You can always ask for a private area to talk to the pharmacist.
- **Emergency?** If you are in a medical crisis, do not use this guide. Call **000** or go to the nearest Hospital Emergency Department.



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Getting started

About this guide

This guide is called **Your medicines, your pharmacist**. This guide is for autistic people, their families, and other supporters. It explains:

- What pharmacists do
- What services you can get at a pharmacy
- What to expect when you visit a pharmacy.

This guide was made to:

- Make pharmacy services easier to understand.
- Help you know what to expect when you visit a pharmacy.
- Support clear communication between you and pharmacy staff.



How to use this guide

You can use this guide in different ways. You do not need to read this guide in order. You can:

- read the whole guide from start to end
- read only the sections you need
- come back to the guide when you need it
- bring this guide to the pharmacy
- share it with family, carers, or other supporters.

At the end of this guide (Section 4), there is a **My Pharmacy Communication Tool** that you can fill out and take with you to the pharmacy to explain:

- how you like to communicate
- what support you need
- what is important for the pharmacist to know.

Sections in this guide

Section 1

Medication supply and management services: Services that help you manage and take your medicines safely.

Section 2

Health services: Services that support your health and wellbeing.

Section 3

Other services: Extra services that help keep you safe.

Section 4

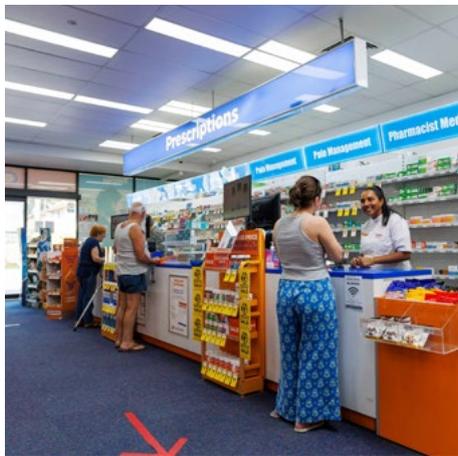
My Pharmacy Communication Tool: A simple tool you can fill out before your pharmacy visit to make it easier to talk to your pharmacist and other pharmacy staff.

Important things to know

- This guide does not include everything a pharmacist can do.
- Pharmacy services may change over time.
- You can always ask a pharmacist or pharmacy staff about their available services.
- This guide is about community pharmacy services in South Australia, although most information will also apply to other states and territories.

Introduction to pharmacy and pharmacists in Australia

What is a pharmacy?



A pharmacy is a place where you can get medicines, medical supplies and receive health advice.

A pharmacy can be called a chemist.

These medicines might be:

- From a prescription given by your doctor.
- Bought without a prescription. These are called over-the-counter medicines.

Medicines can include:

- Tablets
- Liquid medicines
- Creams
- Eye or ear drops
- Inhalers
- Patches
- Vitamins and supplements
- Injections
- Implants



Pharmacies do more than supply medicines. They also offer health services which are explained in detail in this guide.

What is a pharmacist?



A pharmacist is a health professional who knows a lot about medicines. They work together with other health professionals, such as doctors and nurses, to help care for you.

They:

- Give you the right medicine.
- Explain how to take the medicine safely.
- Make sure your medicines work well together.
- Help you stay healthy.



Pharmacists work in many places. They work in:

- Pharmacies
- Hospitals
- Medical clinics
- Aged care homes
- The community, visiting people at home to review their medicines

Pharmacist services made simple



What pharmacists can do for you:

- Pharmacists offer many helpful health services.
- Some services make using your medicines safer and easier.
- Your pharmacist can explain each service and help you choose what is best for you.
- The rest of this guide explains these services in detail.

Section 1: Medication supply and management services



Dispensing and counselling on medicines

What are these services?



Dispensing: The pharmacist gives you the medicine your doctor prescribed.

Counselling: The pharmacist provides information about your medicine and explains how to take your medicine safely.

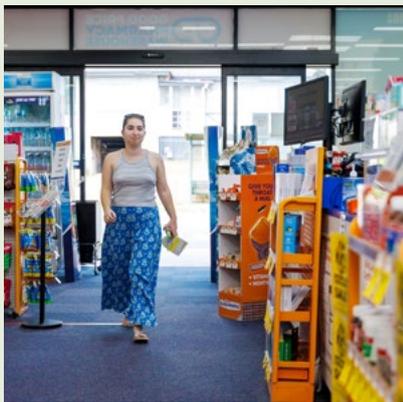
How can these services help you?

- Makes sure you take the right medicine at the right time and in the right way.
- Helps you understand your medicine.
- Reduces mistakes and keeps you safe.

Who can use these services?

- Anyone who has a prescription for a medicine.
- Anyone who wants to understand or know more about their medicine.
- Anyone who has questions or concerns about their medicine.

Step-by-Step: How to access these services



Step 1

Take your prescription to the pharmacy.

- Bring your Medicare card, concession, pension or DVA cards.



Step 2

Go to the counter and give your prescription to the pharmacist or staff.

- If you need extra time or a quiet space, tell the pharmacist or staff.
- If you do not understand what the pharmacist or staff are saying, you can ask them to give you information in a way that works for you. Ask for them to:
 - Say it again in simpler words.
 - Show it with a picture, diagram or video.
 - Write it down on paper.



Step 3

Wait for your medicine to be ready.

- The staff will tell you the approximate wait time.
- You may choose to wait for your medicine in the pharmacy. Seating is usually available.
- You may choose to wait for your medicine outside the pharmacy if you prefer.
- If the wait time is too long, tell the pharmacist that you will return later in the day or the next day to collect your medicine.
- If the pharmacy is too bright or noisy, you can ask for a dimmer and/or quieter space.



Step 4

The pharmacist will:

- Check your prescription.
- Dispense your medicine.
- Make sure the medicine is safe for you and when it is taken together with your other medicines.



Step 5

When your prescription has been dispensed and your medicine is ready, the pharmacist will explain your medicine. They will counsel you on:

- The name of the active ingredient in your medicine. An active ingredient is the chemical in the medicine that makes it work in your body.
- What the medicine is for.
- How much to take and when.
- How to take it (for example, with food or without food).
- What side effects you may experience.

If you feel worried or confused, ask the pharmacist to write the instructions or give you a printed information sheet.

Other options for getting your medicines

- **Electronic prescription (e-script):** An e-script is a digital prescription written by your doctor. Instead of a paper prescription you will receive a text message (SMS) or email with a QR code. The pharmacist will scan the QR code and dispense your medicine. If you have repeats, the pharmacist will ask if you want them:
 - Sent to your phone
 - Sent to your email
 - Printed on paper
- **Ordering Ahead:** Some pharmacies can keep your repeat prescriptions on file so you can call ahead to place an order. Sometimes, you can also order through an app.
- **Active Script List (ASL):** A secure digital list of your prescriptions so you can get medicines from any pharmacy without a paper script. You can ask your pharmacist how to set this up.
- **Deliveries:** Some pharmacies offer home delivery. Ask about delivery areas, times, and costs.

Dose Administration Aid (DAA)

What is this service?



- A DAA is a pack that organises your medicines by day and time.
- It helps you know exactly what medicine to take and when.
- It can prevent accidental missed doses.
- Pharmacy staff prepare the pack, and the pharmacist checks it is correct.

DAAs can be:

- Blister Packs: medicines packed in clear compartments.
- Medication Rolls (Sachets): medicines packed in small packets in a roll, labelled by day and time.

How can this service help you?

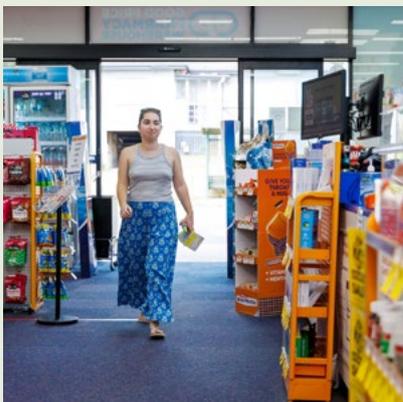
- Helps you take your medicines safely and on time.
- Reduces medicine mistakes and confusion.
- Makes it easier to carry your medicines when you go out.

Who can use this service?

- Anyone who wants help in organising their medicines.
- A DAA is especially helpful for people who:
 - Have a complex medicine routine.
 - Take more than 5 regular medicines.



Step-by-Step: How to access this service



Step 1

Go to your local pharmacy.



Step 2

Ask the pharmacist:

- “Can you help me with a Dose Administration Aid?”
- “What types of packs do you offer?”



Step 3

Bring these items:

- A current medication list from your doctor.
- All your prescriptions and medicines (including vitamins and over-the-counter items).
- Your Medicare card and any concession, pension, DVA, or safety net cards.
- Any safety net records from other pharmacies for this year.

The pharmacist will let you know if you need to bring in anything else.



Step 4

The pharmacist will:

- Check your medicines.
- Talk to you about the best pack for your needs.
- Prepare your pack and tell you when it will be ready. You can arrange a pick-up time or ask for home delivery.



Step 5

Ask about cost:

- “How much does the DAA service cost each week?”
- If you have a Health Care Card or a DVA card, ask: “Am I eligible for a subsidised pack?”



Step 6

- When your pack is ready, check that all your medicines are correct.
- Your pharmacist will explain how to use the pack.
- If your medicines change, tell your pharmacist straight away. Bring a letter from your doctor showing the changes so your pharmacist can update the pack.
- Ask the pharmacist questions if you are unsure about your medicines or your pack.

Medication management reviews

What is this service?

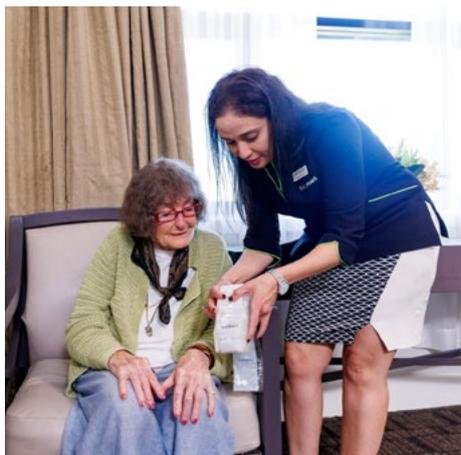


A medication management review is a detailed review of all your medicines. It is done by a specially trained pharmacist. The review involves:

- You
- Your doctor
- A specially trained pharmacist

There are two types of medication management reviews :

- **Home Medicines Review (HMR):** for people living in their own home in the community.
- **Residential Medication Management Review (RMMR):** for people living in an aged care home.



During a medication management review, the pharmacist will visit you at home or in your aged care home. The pharmacist will:

- Review all your medicines, ask you questions and take notes.
- Answer your questions and concerns.
- Make sure your medicines are safe for you.

Prepare a written report for your doctor. The report may include advice for you and your doctor so your medicines work best.

How can this service help you?



A medication management review can:

- Make sure your medicines work well together and are safe.
- Make sure your doctor knows all the medicines you are taking.
- Help fix and prevent medication concerns or mistakes.
- Build confidence in your ability to use and store medicines.
- Make your medicine routine easier when possible.
- Give you time to ask questions.

Who can use this service?

Your doctor decides if a review will help you by considering your medicines and health needs.

You may benefit from a medication management review if you:

- Want to know more about your medicines.
- Have been in hospital recently.
- Have possible side effects (like feeling dizzy, drowsy, or getting a rash).
- Feel your medicines are not working well.
- See more than one doctor.
- Have started a new medicine or have changed your medicine dose.
- Feel confused or worried about your medicines.
- Have trouble remembering to take medicines.

Eligibility (the rules to get this service).

You can have a Home Medicines Review if:

- You have a Medicare or DVA card.
- Your doctor decides the review will help you.
- Your doctor refers you to a specially trained pharmacist.

You can have a Residential Medication Management Review (RMMR) if you are a resident in an aged care home. A RMMR is not available if you are a receiving respite care at an aged care home.

You may find the additional information below helpful:

- Home Medication Review Community Service Announcement:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3VsXGcw6U>
- What is an HMR? (Easy Read): [Microsoft Word - Medicines Review_Easy Read_UPDATED](#)





Step-by-Step: How to access this service



Step 1

Talk to your doctor about wanting a medication management review:

- Ask for a referral for Home Medicines Review (HMR) or Residential Medication Management Review (RMMR)
- Your doctor sends the referral to a pharmacist.

Tip: *The medication management review by the pharmacist is free if you have a Medicare or DVA card.*



Step 2

The pharmacist will contact you (or your aged care home or designated support person) to arrange a time.

- You can have a family member, friend, carer or other supporter with you for the medication review interview.
- You can ask the pharmacist if you would like to have the review at another location if not at home.

Tip: *If you need extra time, let the pharmacist know.*



Step 3

Collect all your medicines, including medicines you take regularly and medicines you take sometimes, including:

- Prescription medicines
- Over-the-counter medicines
- Vitamins and supplements
- Herbal products
- Inhalers
- Patches
- Creams
- Eye and ear drops

Tip: *The pharmacist may ask for extra information, like a medicines list, medical reports or your consent to look in your My Health Record.*





Step 4

When the pharmacist visits:

- They talk to you about your medicines and answer questions.
- They review all your medicines, including if the combination is safe for you.
- They write a report back to your doctor about your medicines.

Tip: *Ask for written instructions or a printed summary if you prefer.*



Step 5

After the medication review, your doctor will:

- Discuss the report with you at an appointment.
- Make a plan for your medicines with you.
- Explain any changes clearly.
- With your consent, share the plan with your pharmacy and support team.

Tip: *Your information stays private between you, your doctor, and the pharmacist.*



MedsCheck and Diabetes MedsCheck

What are these services?



MedsCheck

- You visit your local pharmacy and have a short, one-on-one chat with your pharmacist about all your medicines.
- You do not need a referral from your doctor.
- During the chat, the pharmacist will:
 - Review all your medicines to check they are safe and working well.
 - Explain what your medicines do, how to use them, and how to store them.

Answer any questions or concerns that you have.



Diabetes MedsCheck

- This service is similar to a MedsCheck but is for people with type 2 diabetes who take diabetes medicines.
- You visit your local pharmacy and have a short, one-on-one chat with your pharmacist about your type 2 diabetes medicines and management.
- The pharmacist will review your medicines and give advice about:
 - How your medicines work
 - If they work well together
 - If they manage your condition well
 - How to use and manage them safely.

How can these services help you?

- Learn more about your medicines.
- Ask questions in a private space.
- Make sure your medicines work well together.

Who can use these services?

- People taking multiple medicines.
- People with type 2 diabetes who need support with their medicines.
- Anyone who wants to understand their medicines better.

Tips:

- *You do not need a doctor's referral to get a MedsCheck or Diabetes MedsCheck.*
- *You need to have a Medicare or DVA card.*



Step-by-Step: How to access these services



Step 1

Go to your local pharmacy.



Step 2

Ask the pharmacist:

- "Can I have a MedsCheck?" or
- "Can I have a Diabetes MedsCheck?"



Step 3

The pharmacist will arrange a time:

- You might be able to do it straight away
- You may need to make an appointment for another day.



Step 4

Bring with you:

- All your medicines (for example pills, creams, inhalers and vitamins).
- Any medical reports about changes to your medicines.
- Your prescriptions.
- Your Medicare or DVA card.



Step 5

During the service the pharmacist will sit with you in a private area and:

- Review your medicines.
- Answer your questions.

Tip: You can bring a support person if you want.



Step 6

After the service, you will get:

- Clear advice on how to take your medicines safely.
- An up-to-date medicines list

Tip: Ask for written advice if you prefer.

If you need a more detailed review, the pharmacist can suggest a Home Medicines Review.



Compounding medicines

What is this service?



- Compounding is when a pharmacist makes a medicine specially for you.
- This happens when the usual medicine available does not meet your needs or is no longer available.

How can this service help you?

You may need a compounded medicine if:

- You have an allergy to an ingredient in the usual medicine.
- The medicine is not available or no longer made commercially.
- You need the medicine in a different form (for example, liquid instead of tablet).

Who can use this service?

- Anyone who needs a compounded medicine. You may need a prescription from a doctor.
- The pharmacist will check that the compounding is safe and right for you.
- Sometimes a pharmacist cannot make a compounded medicine if:
 - The same medicine already exists and is available to you.
 - The pharmacy does not have the right equipment or training.
 - There is no evidence that the medicine is safe for you.

Tip: *A veterinarian can write a prescription for a compounded medicine for an animal.*





Step-by-Step: How to access this service



Step 1

Find a compounding pharmacy by:

- Searching online for “compounding pharmacy.”
- Using a website like www.findapharmacy.com.au to search for a compounding pharmacy
- Ask your pharmacist: “Do you offer compounding?”

Tips:

- *Not all pharmacists can make compounded medicines.*
- *If they cannot help, they will usually tell you the name of a pharmacy that can.*



Step 2

If a compounded medicine needs a prescription, bring it with you.



Step 3

The pharmacist will:

- Review the prescription to understand the medicine and your needs.
- Tell you how long it will take to make your medicine.
- Make the medicine to suit your needs.

Tips:

- *Ask about the cost before they make the medicine.*
- *Many compounded medicines are not covered by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) Medicare, or concession cards.*
- *The PBS is a government program that helps pay for many medicines, but not all medicines are covered.*
- *If you have private health insurance, they may cover part of the cost of medicines not covered by the PBS.*





Step 4

The pharmacist will explain:

- Key information about your medicine, why it is compounded, and how it is different from regular medicines.
- How to use the medicine safely.
- The expiry date and how to store it.
- Possible side effects and what to do if they happen.
- When you should not use the medicine.
- When you should attend for a follow-up with your pharmacist or doctor.

Return Unwanted Medicines (RUM) service

What is this service?



- A free and safe way to dispose of expired or unwanted medicines.
- You can take unwanted medicines to any pharmacy in Australia.
- Your pharmacist will:
 - Accept your unwanted medicines at any time.
 - Place them in a secure bin for safe disposal.
 - Ensure disposal follows environmental and safety regulations.

How can this service help you?

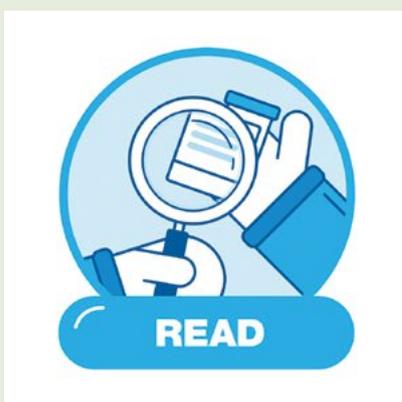
- Prevents accidents and poisonings at home.
- Reduces the risk of medicines being used by the wrong person.
- Protects the environment by avoiding unsafe disposal (for example flushing or throwing medicine in the bin).
- Helps keep your medicine area at home safe and organised.

Who can use this service?

- You can use this service if you:
 - Have expired medicines.
 - Have medicines you no longer need.
 - Want to reduce clutter at home.
 - Want to make your home safer.
 - Want to protect the environment.

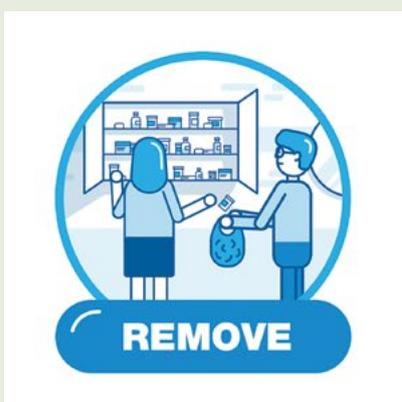


Step-by-Step: How to use this service



Step 1

Check the expiry dates on your medicines.
Decide which ones you no longer need.



Step 2

Place the expired or unwanted medicines in a bag or container.



Step 3

Take the bag or container to your local pharmacy.

- Give the medicines to the pharmacist.
- The pharmacist will place them in a secure disposal bin for safe destruction.

Tips:

- *This service is free at most pharmacies in Australia.*
- *Using this service helps keep people and the environment safe.*
- *Medicines should not be flushed down the toilet, poured down the sink or placed in a normal rubbish bin.*



Section 2: Health services



Vaccinations at the pharmacy

What is this service?



- Pharmacists can give many vaccines such as influenza (flu) and COVID-19 vaccines without a prescription.
- You can get government-funded vaccines (if eligible) and private vaccines (like travel vaccines).
- Some vaccines are free if you meet eligibility rules and have a Medicare or DVA card. Others may cost money.

How can this service help you?

- Can help protect you from getting sick.
- Quick and convenient.
- No need to visit a doctor for most vaccines.

Who can use this service?

- Anyone who needs a vaccine who meets the age and eligibility rules.

Step-by-Step: How to access this service

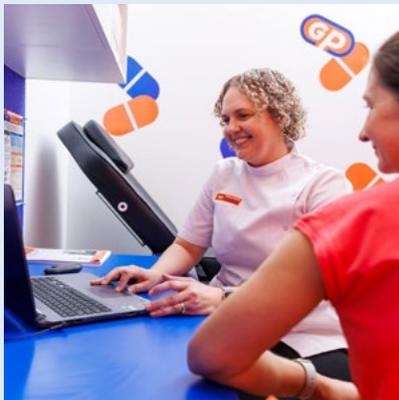


Step 1

Ask your pharmacist:

- “Do you give vaccinations?”
- “Which vaccines are free and which do I need to pay for?”

Tip: Ask about costs before booking.



Step 2

Book an appointment if needed.

- At some pharmacies no appointment is needed, just go into the pharmacy. Others need a booking.

Tips:

- *If you need more time or a quiet space, let the pharmacist know.*
- *Ask if you can have more than one vaccine at the same time.*
 - *Some vaccines can be given together.*
 - *Others need a gap between doses (your pharmacist will explain how long to wait).*





Step 3

Bring your Medicare or DVA card.

Bring your vaccination records if you have them. Fill out consent forms if asked.

- With your consent, the pharmacist can check your My Health Record to see which vaccines you have had and which ones you need.

Tip: *If you feel faint or are nervous about injections, tell the pharmacist. They can help you feel more comfortable. They may be able to use a numbing cream to reduce pain.*



Step 4

The pharmacist gives the vaccine safely.

- They will explain possible side effects and what to do next.
- You will need to wait at the pharmacy for 15 minutes after the injection.
- You can ask the pharmacist for a quiet space to wait.
- The pharmacist will record that you had the vaccine in the Australian Immunisation Register.

Step 5

Follow any advice about possible side effects or follow-up doses.

Tips:

- *Ask for written after-care instructions if you prefer.*
- *If you have concerns after leaving, call the pharmacy or your doctor.*



Pharmacist-administered medicines by injection

What is this service?



- If your doctor prescribes an injectable medicine, your pharmacist may be able to give you the injection.
- The injection is given in a private consultation room.
- Your pharmacist can administer your medicine correctly and safely.
- Fees apply.

How can this service help you?

- It can save time.
- It may be more convenient than visiting a doctor.

Who can use this service?

- Anyone with a prescription for an injectable medicine.
- Check with your pharmacy if they offer this service for your medicine.



Step-by-Step: How to access this service



Step 1

Ask your pharmacist:

- “Do you offer an injection service for my medicine?”
- “What injections can you administer?”

Tip: *Ask about costs and availability before booking.*



Step 2

The service takes place in a private consultation room. Ask if you need to book an appointment or can ‘walk-in’.

Tip: *If you need more time or a quiet space, let the pharmacist know.*



Step 3

Bring with you:

- Your prescription if needed.
- Your Medicare or DVA card.
- Any blood test results if relevant.

Tip: *If you feel faint or dislike injections, tell the pharmacist. They can help you feel more comfortable.*



Step 4

During your appointment:

- The pharmacist will explain your medicine and answer your questions.
- The pharmacist will give the injection safely.

Tip: *Ask for written instructions or a printed information sheet if you like.*

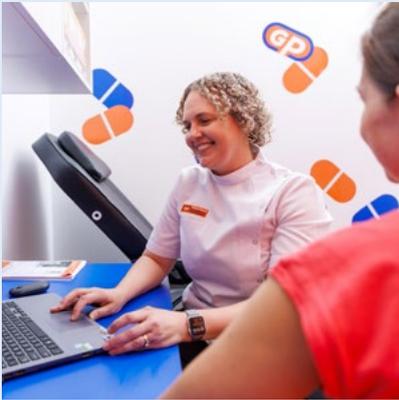


Step 5

If you want to learn to inject yourself:

- Ask the pharmacist if they can teach and support you. They can teach you safe techniques and precautions.

Tip: *Practice under supervision until you feel confident.*



Step 6

Aftercare:

- Follow any advice about side effects or next follow-up doses.

Tip: *If you have any concerns after having the injection, call the pharmacy or your doctor.*



Minor ailments support

What is this service?



Minor ailments support means help for common health problems that don't usually need a doctor.

All pharmacists can give advice, medicine, and care for minor ailments so you feel better.

Some examples of what your pharmacist can help with:

- Coughs, colds, and sore throats
- Mild skin conditions (rashes, eczema)
- Hay fever and allergies
- Minor aches and pains
- Indigestion and heartburn
- Head lice
- Threadworms

How can this service help you?

- Fast and convenient. No appointment needed.
- Expert advice from a qualified healthcare professional.
- Cost-effective. Many treatments are available without a prescription.
- Shorter waiting times compared to seeing a GP or going to an Emergency Department.

Who can use this service?

- Anyone who wants help with a minor ailment.



Step-by-Step: How to access this service



Step 1

Go to your local pharmacy and tell them what is wrong.

Ask:

- “Can you help with my symptoms?”

Or

- “Can I have some medicine to help with my headache?”



Step 2

The pharmacist will:

- Ask about your symptoms and health history.
- Recommend safe treatments.
- Provide general advice to help manage your ailment
- Tell you if you need to see a doctor.



Step 3

While you talk to the pharmacist:

- Let the pharmacist know if you need extra time or a quiet space.
- Show a list of all your medicines or tell them what you take.
- Mention any allergies or other health conditions.



Step 4

After getting advice or treatment:

- If your symptoms get worse or don't improve, seek medical advice.
- Your pharmacist will tell you what to expect and when to follow up.

Community pharmacy urinary tract infections (UTI) service

What is this service?



- Some pharmacists in South Australia have done extra training to help with a simple urinary tract infections (UTIs).
- You can get treatment and advice at your local pharmacy without seeing a doctor.
- This service makes healthcare easier and reduces waiting times for getting professional help for a UTI.

How can this service help you?

- Quick help for urinary tract infections (UTIs).
- Allows more options and flexibility on where to get help.
- Less waiting for a GP or Emergency Department.

Who can use this service?

You can use this service if you are a:

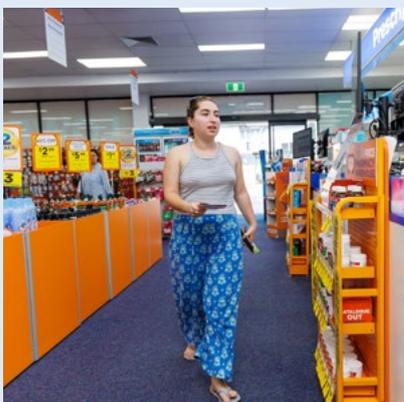
- Woman aged 18 to 65 years with a normal female urinary tract.
- Likely have a simple UTI. This is checked by the pharmacist.
- Low risk of problems.

This service is not for:

- People under 18 or over 65 years.
- Men.
- People who have had gender affirmation surgery (bottom surgery) as the surgery may have changed the shape or structure of the urethra (a thin, tube-like passage that allows urine to leave your bladder and exit your body).
- Complex UTI cases – these need a doctor.



Step-by-Step: How to access this service



Step 1

Go to your local pharmacy.

Ask:

- “Do you offer the UTI service?”
- “Can I speak to a pharmacist about my symptoms?”

Tips:

- *Ask about cost involved.*
- *There may be a consultation fee plus medicine cost.*





Step 2

The pharmacist will:

- Ask questions about your symptoms and health.
- Decide if you can be treated at the pharmacy.

If yes:

- You may get antibiotics and advice on how to use them.
- You will get information about side effects from the antibiotic.
- You will get general advice on managing UTI symptoms
- You will need to see your GP if symptoms get worse or do not improve in 2 days.

If no:

- The pharmacist will refer you to a doctor or another health service.

Tip: *If you need more time or a quiet space, tell the pharmacist.*



Step 3

Records and follow-up:

- The pharmacist will keep a record of your visit and treatment.
- They may upload details to My Health Record (unless you say no).
- You can get a copy of the record to share with your GP.

Oral contraceptive pill (OCP) resupply service

What is this service?



- Some pharmacists in South Australia have done extra training and can resupply the oral contraceptive pill without a doctor's prescription if you meet certain rules.
- This service gives you more choice and easier access to your OCP medicine.

How can this service help you?

- Quick and convenient. No need to see a GP for OCP resupply.
- Helps you stay on track with your treatment plan.
- Private and professional advice from a trained pharmacist.

Who can use this service?

Women aged 17 to 50 years who:

- Have been on an approved OCP continuously for at least 2 years.
- Have seen a GP or other authorised prescriber for review in the last 2 years.

Tip: *This service is also available to transgender, gender-diverse, intersex, and non-binary people who were assigned or assumed female at birth*



Step-by-Step: How to access this service

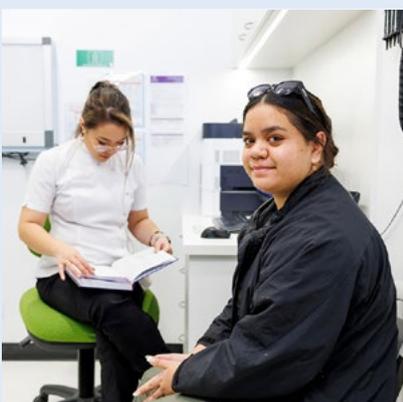


Step 1

Go to your local pharmacy and ask:

“Do you offer the OCP resupply service?”

Tip: Ask about costs. There may be a consultation fee plus the cost of the medicine.



Step 2

The pharmacist will check:

- Your age and eligibility.
- Your current OCP and how long you have been taking it.
- If you've had a GP review in the last 2 years.

Tip: If you need more time or a quiet space, let the pharmacist know.



Step 3

The pharmacist will do a clinical review.

- They will ask about your health and any risks that may affect you taking the OCP.
- If OCP resupply is safe, they will give you one original manufacturer's pack of your usual OCP.
- If not safe, they will refer you to a GP or another health service.

Tip:

- People aged 17–40 can get OCP resupply for up to 12 months.
- People aged 41–50 will need a GP review after the first pack.





Step 4

The pharmacist will:

- Explain how to take your OCP medicine safely.
- Give you a written record of your consultation.
- Upload details to My Health Record (if you have one and consent).

Tip: *Share your record of the consultation with your GP to keep your care team informed.*



Step 5

After care:

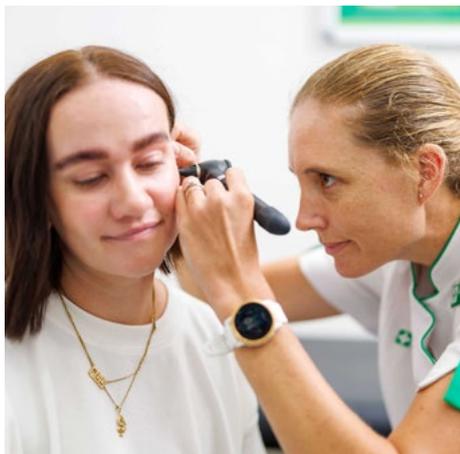
- Follow the pharmacist's advice about when to see your GP for a check-up.
- If you have side effects or concerns, seek medical advice.

Community pharmacy expanded scope of practice

What is this service?



- Some pharmacists in South Australia have extra training and can offer more health services at your local pharmacy.
- These are called 'expanded scope of practice' services.
- The service may involve prescribing medicines that are usually only prescribed by doctors.
- These services start in 2026 and will roll out in stages.
- This means you can get help for common health problems without always needing to see a doctor.
- It will make healthcare easier to access and reduce pressure on GPs and hospitals.



Pharmacists who do the 'expanded scope' training can give more types of care and treatments. They can help with:

- Skin conditions (mild psoriasis, acne, dermatitis)
- Shingles
- Impetigo (skin infection)
- Minor wounds
- Nausea and vomiting
- Reflux and heartburn
- Ear infections (otitis externa and otitis media)
- Allergies and hay fever
- Hormonal contraception
- Weight management
- Mild muscle and joint pain
- Oral health checks and fluoride application
- Travel health advice
- Nicotine cessation (quitting smoking and/or vaping)

How can this service help you?

- Gives you more choice for accessing healthcare.
- Faster help for common conditions.
- Less waiting for GP or emergency department care.

Who can use this service?

- Anyone who has a common health problem that can be managed by a pharmacist with extra training.
- There are rules for each service so ask your pharmacist for more information.



Step-by-Step: How to access these services



Step 1

Go to your local pharmacy.

Ask:

- “Do you offer expanded scope services?”
- “Can I speak to a pharmacist about my symptoms/condition?”

Tip:

- *Ask about costs. There may be a consultation fee plus medicine cost.*



Step 2

The pharmacist will:

- Offer to see you in a private consultation room.
- Check your symptoms and ask some questions.
- Decide if they can help you at the pharmacy or if you need to see a doctor.

If treatment is suitable:

- The pharmacist will give advice or medicines.
- They will explain how to use the medicine safely.

If treatment is not suitable:

- They will refer you to a GP or other health service.



Step 3

Records and follow-up:

- The pharmacist will keep a record of your visit and treatment.
- They may upload details to your My Health Record (unless you say no).
- You can get a copy of the record to share with your GP.

Nicotine cessation support

What is this service?



- Nicotine cessation support means help to quit smoking and/or vaping.
- It includes advice, medicines and programs that make quitting easier.
- Your pharmacist can:
 - Give expert advice.
 - Recommend safe products.
 - Support you through the quitting process.

There is no single way to quit. Different methods work for different people. You can try:

- Gradually reducing cigarettes and/or vapes.
- Stopping suddenly (“cold turkey”).
- Using nicotine replacement products or other medicines.
- Counselling and support programs.

How can this service help you?

- Quitting smoking and/or vaping without information and support can be difficult.
- Quitting smoking has many health benefits:
 - Lower risk of serious illnesses.
 - Within days, your breathing and movement become easier.
 - After 1 year, the risk of heart attack is halved.
 - After 10 years, the risk of dying from lung cancer is halved.
- Quitting vaping is also beneficial, although less is known.
- Quitting smoking and/or vaping saves money.

Who can use this service?

- Anyone who wants to quit smoking and/or vaping.
- People who have tried before and need extra support.



Step-by-Step: How to access this service



Step 1

Go to your local pharmacy.

Ask the pharmacist:

- “Can you help me quit smoking/vaping?”
- “What options do you recommend to help me stop smoking/vaping?”

Tip: *If you need more time or a quiet space, let the pharmacist know.*



Step 2

The pharmacist will:

- Ask you about your smoking/vaping habits.
- Explain different quitting methods.
- Help you choose the best plan that works for you.



Step 3

The pharmacist may suggest:

- Nicotine replacement products (patches, gum, lozenges).
- Prescription medicines.
- Counselling or support programs.
- Nicotine vapes (only if considered safe). Some vapes require a prescription from a doctor.

Tips:

- *Nicotine vapes are only available for people over 18 and when safe and effective.*
- *Other treatments (medicines and counselling) have stronger evidence for helping people quit.*



Section 3: Other services



Take-Home Naloxone Program

What is this service?



- Naloxone is a medicine that can reverse an opioid overdose and save a life. The Take-Home Naloxone Program gives you a free naloxone kit and training on how to use it.
- You can get naloxone from participating pharmacies without a prescription.

How can this service help?

- Helps prevent death from opioid overdose.
- Easy to carry and use in an emergency.
- Free and available to anyone at risk or who might help someone at risk.

Who can use this service?

- People who take opioid medicines (like morphine, oxycodone, fentanyl) on prescription.
- People who use opioids recreationally.
- Family, friends, or carers who want to be prepared to help.



Step-by-Step: How to access this service



Step 1

Go to your local pharmacy and ask:

“Can I get a Take-Home Naloxone kit?”

Tip: *The service is free. You do not need a prescription.*

- *There is a map of registered pharmacies and clinics who are participating in the program in SA. Click **here** to see the map.*



Step 2

The pharmacist will:

- Give you a naloxone kit (nasal spray or injection).
- Show you how to use naloxone safely.
- Explain what to do in an emergency.

Tip: *If you need more time or a quiet space, let the pharmacist know.*





Step 3

Ask the pharmacist to explain the emergency steps:

- How to recognise an opioid overdose.
- When to call **000** for help.

Tip: Ask for written instructions or a training video link if you prefer.



Step 4

Keep the naloxone kit in a safe, easy-to-reach place.

- Check the expiry date regularly.
- Replace it before it expires.

Tips:

- *If you use naloxone, always call 000.*
- *After you give naloxone, the effect is temporary and the person still needs medical care.*
- *Tell your pharmacist if you use your kit so they can give you a new one.*



Needle and syringe program

What is this service?



- The needle and syringe program helps prevent the spread of blood-borne viruses like Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C.
- Some pharmacies in South Australia can help people who use needles. They can give clean needles and syringes, and safe places to throw them away.

What can you get through the program?

- Sterile needles and syringes.
- Alcohol swabs.
- Sharps containers for safe disposal.

How can this service help you?

- Reduces the risk of infection from sharing needles.
- Helps keep you and the community safe.
- Provides safe disposal of used needles and syringes.

Who can use this service?

- People who inject drugs and need sterile equipment.
- Anyone who needs to safely dispose of used needles or syringes.
- Carers or family members who want to help someone dispose of sharps safely.

Step-by-Step: How to access this service



Step 1

Find a participating pharmacy.

Ask:

- “Do you offer the Needle and Syringe Program?”

Tips:

- *You can search for participating SA pharmacies online or on the **Government of South Australia** website.*
- *There is a fee to purchase a needle and syringe kit. Ask your pharmacy about the cost.*



Step 2

Buy pre-packed sterile injecting equipment. Packs include:

- needles
- syringes
- swabs
- disposal containers.

Tips:

- *Ask for a quiet space if you need privacy.*
- *Keep your sharps container in a safe place.*



Step 3

Dispose of used needles safely.

- Return them to the pharmacy in a sharps container.
- The pharmacy will dispose of them safely.

Tips:

- *Never throw needles in household rubbish or public bins.*
- *Replace the sharps container when full. Pharmacies will help you with the disposal.*



Point-of-care testing

What is this service?



- Point-of-care testing means quick health checks and tests done at the pharmacy.
- Results are available straight away, so you can get advice without waiting for a doctor's appointment.

Tests that are available include:

- Blood pressure checks
- Blood glucose (sugar) levels
- Warfarin monitoring
- Cholesterol levels
- Rapid antigen tests (RAT) for COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses

Tip: *Some pharmacies may offer other tests — ask your pharmacist.*



How can this service help you?

- Fast and convenient. No need to visit a medical clinic for basic checks.
- Helps you monitor your health and manage conditions early.
- Can guide you on whether you need further medical care.

Who can use this service?

- Anyone who wants a quick health check.
- People managing chronic conditions like diabetes or high blood pressure.
- People who need a test before starting or adjusting medicines.

Step-by-Step: How to access this service



Step 1

Go to your local pharmacy and ask:

“Do you offer health checks or point-of-care testing?”

Tip:

- *Ask about costs — some tests may be free; others may have a fee.*
- *Ask if you need to make an appointment.*



Step 2

The pharmacist will:

- Explain what the test involves.
- Ask about your health history and medicines.

Tip: *If you need more time or a quiet space, let the pharmacist know.*



Step 3

After the service:

- Follow the pharmacist’s advice about next steps.
- Keep your results for your health records.
- If your results are outside the safe range, the pharmacist will advise you to seek medical advice promptly.

Glossary

- **Adverse effect:**
A different name for a side effect. A side effect is reaction to a medicine that is unintended and can be different for different medicines.
- **Australian Immunisation Register:**
This is a national list that keeps track of your vaccine.
- **Compounding:**
When a pharmacist makes a medicine specially for you. This happens when medicines available do not meet your needs.
- **Dispensing:**
The pharmacist giving you the medicine your doctor (or other prescriber) prescribed.
- **Dose administration aid (DAA):**
A pack that organises your medicines by day and time. The pack is prepared by pharmacy staff and checked by the pharmacist to make sure it is correct.
- **Eligibility:**
Means you are allowed to get the pharmacy service or support because you meet the rules.
- **Healthcare professional:**
Healthcare professionals provide care for people. This includes doctor, nurses, pharmacists and specialist doctors.
- **Health history:**
Your current and past medical and social history.
- **Medication review:**
When your doctor or pharmacist reviews your medicines to improve how effective they are.
- **MedsChecks and Diabetes MedsChecks:**
A one-on-one chat with your pharmacist about your medicines. A short and basic review of your medication.
- **Monitoring:**
Measuring a part of your health, such as your blood pressure or your blood-sugar levels over time.
- **My Health Record:**
An online summary of your health information that your pharmacist or doctor can check.
- **Nicotine cessation:**
Another name for quitting smoking and/or vaping.
- **Opioid:**
A strong pain medicine. It can help with pain, but it must be used carefully.
- **Prescription:**
A written or electronic instruction from a prescriber (e.g. doctor). It tells the pharmacist what medicine you need and instructions for how to use the medicine.
- **Safety net card:**
This card helps make medicines cheaper after you have already paid a lot for them this year.

For more information about medicines see:

- 5 Questions to ask about your medicines: https://www.choosingwisely.org.au/assets/NPSMW2464_GMBH_5-QuestionsAboutYourMedicines.pdf
- Health Direct: **Consumer medicine information**
- Medicines information service **Home - 1300 MEDICINE**
- Pharmaceutical Society of Australia: **Medicine Safety Disability Care report**

Crisis and Emergency Contacts

Beyond Blue



1300 224 636

Lifeline



13 11 14

Veterans Helpline



1800 011 046

Section 4: My Pharmacy Communication Tool

How to use this: You can print this page, fill it out on your device, or simply show this screen to the pharmacist when you arrive.



1. About Me

To help the pharmacist address you correctly and safely.

- **Legal Name** (for prescriptions):

.....

Preferred Name:

Pronouns:.....

- **Best way to reach me:**

Phone SMS Email

- **Support Person:** I am Alone
 With a support person/carer



2. The Goal of My Visit

Check all that apply.

- **I am here to:**

- Pick up a prescription (Script)
- Ask a question about a medication
- Get a health service (e.g., Vaccination, UTI, MedsCheck)
- Buy an “over-the-counter” medicine (e.g., pain relief, cold & flu)
- Other:

- **What I need help with:**

- Understanding how or when to take my medicine
- Organising my pills (e.g., Dose Administration Aid/Blister Pack)
- Managing side effects or allergies
- Financial / Cost concerns

3. My Communication Preferences

This helps the pharmacist adjust their style to meet your needs.

- **Information Style:**

- Use short, direct sentences.
- I prefer written instructions to take home.
- Use visual aids or diagrams.
- Ask me “Yes” or “No” questions if possible.

- **Environment & Processing:**

- I need a quiet or private space to talk.
- I need extra time to process what you have said before I answer.
- Please don't use “medical jargon”; explain things simply.

4. Essential Medical Info

- **Other meds I take:** List attached OR
 List here:

.....
.....
.....

- **My Allergies:**

.....

5. My Specific Questions

Write or type anything else you want to make sure you don't forget.

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....



Prescriptions

Thank you for using the Your medicines, your pharmacist guide.

We hope you have found the guide helpful.

We want to improve the guide and make sure we keep making helpful guides in the future.

Can you provide any feedback to help us improve our guides to help autistic people?

This survey is optional. You do not need to complete it if you don't want to.

You can scan the QR code below to open the feedback survey.



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