

Pharmacists in aged care

Protecting our most vulnerable Australians from hospitalisation and death caused by medicines

Pharmacists in aged care are specially trained, credentialed pharmacists who perform a range of tasks to ensure medicine safety in residential aged care.



Quality Use of Medicines & Medicines Safety is a National Health Priority Area



Pharmacists in aged care significantly reduce medicine-related harm

Over 95%

of residents living in aged care homes have at least one medication-related problem: most have three problems

Up to one-third

of people living in aged care are taking benzodiazepines; more than half use the medicine for too long

40% – 50%

of people living in aged care homes are on medicines that have the potential to cause sedation or confusion

Over half

of people living in aged care homes are prescribed medicines that are considered potentially inappropriate in older people

Roles of pharmacists in aged care

1. Residential Medication Management Reviews



Individualised review of all of a resident's medicines and care goals to:

- Identify and recommend resolutions to resolve medicine safety risks, drug interactions & resident concerns
- Monitor high risk medicines for safety

Clinical, evidence-based and resident-centred

Clinical governance



- Lead Medication Advisory Committee
- Reduce medication incidents and adverse effects
- Conduct clinical audits & medicine use evaluations to drive best practice medicine use
- Support reduction of drug burden for residents

Support system level change and strive for excellence

2. Medication reconciliation



- Document best possible medicine history
- Document allergies and adverse reactions
- Reconcile medicine errors and omissions at transitions of care

Improve medicine safety at transitions of care

Education



- Facilitate education for care staff, residents & families
- Deliver clinical improvement activities
- Provide clinical advice to care team

Supports coordinated and multidisciplinary care

We need regular reviewing and de-prescribing of medications whenever we can





- Aged care nurse

... reducing medication related incidents has always been a major challenge & pharmacists help




- Aged care nurse

Preventable harm is costly – pharmacists in aged care are a valuable investment to prevent harm

Challenges to pharmacists in aged care

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|  <p>Funding model</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged Care On-site Pharmacist (ACOP) program FTE allocation is insufficient to achieve medicine safety objectives • Fixed rate ACOP remuneration does not offer pay progression based on experience or post-graduate qualification • Many aged care homes are unable to attract a pharmacist and residents health is at risk | <p>IMPACT</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer pharmacists in residential aged care homes • Residents exposed to preventable harm, such as hospitalisation and death • Service fee value declines • Eroded remuneration |
|  <p>Indexation frozen</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service fees were frozen in 2019 • The real service fee for RMMRs has declined by 15.7% because of this • Credentialed pharmacists are forced to choose other career options and access to pharmacist care in aged care declines | |
|  <p>Inflexible rules</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflexible rules result in slow uptake of ACOP model and reduced access to pharmacist care • Inflexibility in onsite attendance time reduces efficiencies in service delivery and uptake • Rural and remote areas face the greatest supply and access risk • ACOP and RMMR should exist in parallel | |

Solutions to increase pharmacists in aged care

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|  | <p>Refine ACOP funding model <i>Support sustainable service delivery and improve medicine safety metrics across aged care</i></p> |
|  | <p>Reinstate indexation of RMMR service fee <i>Preserve and build this critical skilled workforce</i></p> |
|  | <p>Improve flexibility of delivery <i>Match staff to facility workflows and needs</i></p> |

Safe use of medicine in aged care – our older Australians need pharmacists involved

Support PSA's Pharmacy Program Reform Package through the First Pharmacy Programs Agreement