



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health and Ageing**

**Advice for approved pharmacists supplying PBS medicines to patients  
in areas affected by the Queensland Flood Emergency - January 2011**

**Patient Entitlement**

If patients do not have their Medicare, DVA or Centrelink card the pharmacist should ring the usual PBS Inquiry line 132 290 (*press option 1*), for assistance with a patient's Medicare or concessional details.

**Dispensing medicines under the 3 day emergency supply rule without a prescription**

A patient can receive a 3 day supply of medication without a prescription.

**A pharmacist may dispense using the 'owing prescription' provision**

The pharmacist can confirm the patient's current medication details with the prescriber, or a prescriber may direct a pharmacist to supply a medicine to a patient in an emergency situation. Patients may be issued the amount authorised by the prescriber, or up to one month's supply if no quantity is specified. The prescriber is required to forward a paper prescription to the pharmacy to cover the emergency supply as soon as practicable, in accordance with state law.

**Records of emergency supplies**

To ensure accurate records are kept of emergency supplies to patients, pharmacists should use the attached form to record their actions in circumstances where patients are unable to pay for supplies.

**Pharmacy can endorse prescription as 'immediate supply necessary' if the medicine is required within 4/20 day rule**

The pharmacist can provide another supply but must endorse the prescription with the words 'immediate supply necessary' and sign the PBS prescription.

**PBS Authority line 1800 888 333 (PBS) 1800 552 580 (RPBS)**

If prescribers contact the Authority line and the prescription falls under the 'too soon' rule [because of the loss of an approved authority prescription or valid repeats], Medicare Australia will exempt these patients from the 'too soon' rule and approve the authority. If the Authority line is unavailable, a message will indicate the process to be followed by prescribers - to endorse the prescription with the words 'emergency authorised by Medicare Australia', with a date, time and signature.

**Emergency relocation of a pharmacy affected by floodwaters**

Pharmacist seeking to temporarily relocate their approved pharmacy due to flood damage should send an email to Medicare Australia [[pbs.approval.enquiries@medicareaustralia.gov.au](mailto:pbs.approval.enquiries@medicareaustralia.gov.au)], quoting the name of the pharmacy, their current PBS approval number, current address of premises, and proposed address of premises, and expected timeframe for return to the approved premises. The Australian Community Pharmacy Authority will fast track these requests for temporary relocation within 24 hours in most instances. The PBS pharmacy approval number will not change for these temporary relocations. Wholesale distributors will be advised by the Department of Health and Ageing of the temporary approval of the new premises to facilitate delivery of PBS medicines to the new address.

**Medicine distribution arrangements**

The Department of Health and Ageing is monitoring PBS supply arrangements in flood affected parts of Queensland to ensure that patient access to essential medicines can continue during this Emergency.

### **Extension of the PBS listing for ciprofloxacin**

The Australian Government has extended the PBS listing for ciprofloxacin oral tablets from 20 January 2011 to increase the treatment options for people with skin infections associated with contact with contaminated flood water. This means that ciprofloxacin can now be prescribed under the PBS for use in skin or soft tissue infections (wound management) where other antimicrobial agents are ineffective or inappropriate.

Prescribers should consult the comprehensive guidelines for the prescribing of ciprofloxacin which are available on [www.pbs.gov.au](http://www.pbs.gov.au) and <http://www.qld.gov.au/floods/> when considering this treatment option for wound management. The usual PBS copayments will apply to these supplies.

Clinicians will need authority from Medicare Australia to prescribe this medicine and the change to the listing will be time limited to 31 March 2011.

### **Claiming - Missing prescriptions/no paperwork**

If your pharmacy has lost or damaged paperwork due to the floods you can submit a Statutory Declaration to Medicare Australia. This should include a statement about loss of paperwork as a result of the floods, and an undertaking that if the paperwork is found it will be forwarded to Medicare Australia and that an insurance claim has not been made.

E.g. the wording for the Statutory Declaration would need the following:

- I cannot provide the paper prescriptions to support this claim because of floods.
- I have not, and will not make a claim against my insurance company for the lost claim, and if the prescriptions are located I will forward them to Medicare Australia with a note of explanation stating that I will not resubmit these prescriptions for payment.

A completed Statutory Declaration can be sent to:

Teams Manager  
GPO Box 9826  
Brisbane QLD 4000

PLEASE NOTE: In addition to the above if the claim is a Claims Transmission Scheme (CTS) claim the pharmacy must provide a copy of the CTS disk with the claim header to be eligible for payment.

Pharmacists enquiring about payment for claims with missing prescriptions due to the flood can phone 132 290 (*press option 2*) and ask to speak with a Teams Manager.

Pharmacists can download a Statutory Declaration form from the following government website: [www.ag.gov.au/statdec](http://www.ag.gov.au/statdec) or purchase one from any post office or newsagent.

Pharmacists experiencing difficulties lodging their paperwork with Medicare Australia within the required timeframe are urged to contact Medicare Australia on 132 290 (*press option 2*) to discuss their options.

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