



Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care

# Electronic National Residential Medication Charts (eNRMC)

Transitional Arrangement

Residential Aged Care Services Information Pack



# The eNRMC Transitional Arrangement – an overview

The Department of Health and Aged Care (the Department) has implemented an eNRMC Transitional Arrangement. The Arrangement allows Residential Aged Care Services (RACS) to adopt and benefit from eNRMC products.

In response to significant medication management issues identified through the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, the Government is supporting RACS to adopt and implement conformant eNRMC software. eNRMCs are electronic medication management (EMM) systems that support the electronic prescribing, supply and claiming of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and Repatriation PBS (RPBS) medicines.

Unfortunately, there have been delays to Prescription Delivery Services (PDS) and dispensing software vendors meeting the technical conformance requirements to support the electronic prescribing and supply of PBS/RPBS medicines directly from eNRMCs. Instead of delaying the rollout of eNRMC software systems which have met these technical conformance requirements, the eNRMC Transitional Arrangement was implemented in July 2022. This enabled RACS to not only start using these eNRMC products as soon as possible, but also obtain funding to defray adoption and implementation costs. The implementation of eNRMC software has been shown to enhance resident centred care, and improve both medication safety and quality use of medicines.

The government has enacted the eNRMC Transitional Arrangement through an amendment to the eNRMC Trial Legislation: [National Health \(Electronic National Residential Medication Chart Trial\) Special Arrangement 2018](#). The legislation allows RACS to adopt and implement an eNRMC product which:

- Meets the technical conformance requirements of the latest version of the Electronic Prescribing Conformance Profile;
- is listed on the Australian Digital Health Agency's (the Agency) [eNRMC Transitional Conformance Register](#).

Although this federal legislation allows eNRMCs to be used throughout Australia, the use of these products is also subject to [state or territory requirements](#).

The Transitional Arrangement commenced on 1 July 2022 and will continue until broader prescription infrastructure (ie. PDS and dispensing software) are conformant with the latest version of the Electronic Prescribing Conformance Profile.

RACS, [prescribers](#) and [pharmacies](#) can use a Transitional eNRMC Product for PBS medication chart prescribing, dispensing and administration. Prescribers and pharmacists must follow specific prescribing, dispensing and claiming requirements under the Transitional Arrangement.

## Residential Aged Care Services (RACS)

For the purposes of this Arrangement, "RACS" encompasses standard Residential Aged Care Services, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program residential services and Multi-Purpose Services that provide residential aged care services. RACS can use the funding provided through the eNRMC Adoption grant opportunity to help cover the costs of adoption.

## What is an eNRMC Software Product?

An eNRMC Product is a type of EMM system that acts as a single source of truth for a patient or resident, consolidating all important information about the medicines they have been prescribed, supplied and administered.

An eNRM system can legally be used to prescribe, supply, and claim PBS and RPBS medicines. Prescribers can use an eNRM to generate electronic prescriptions which are sent to the resident's pharmacy of choice, without the need for additional paper prescriptions. It also enables RACS staff to record medicines administration, and track other important details regarding a resident's health to better support their care,

## What are the benefits of using an eNRM Product?

An eNRM system benefits residents, providers, aged care staff, prescribers, and suppliers, by:

- enhancing resident centred care,
- removing the need for paper-based prescriptions and medication charts,
- decreasing medication safety risks, such as inconsistencies between prescriber records and paper medication charts, also lessening time spent by suppliers reconciling these differences,
- increasing visibility of residents' medication records for prescribers, suppliers, and aged care staff,
- providing alerts to advise of allergies or medication interactions, and reminders when new prescriptions or follow-up consultations will soon be required,
- providing real-time electronic collaboration and communication tools,
- reducing administrative burden for aged care providers and staff, prescribers, and suppliers, and
- reducing the number of regular medications taken by an individual (polypharmacy).

An eNRM system enables aged care staff, prescribers, and suppliers to reduce medication errors and gain greater flexibility and coordination in the way their services are delivered. It also supports consumer-centred care and enhances communication between all those supporting the resident's clinical care.

## What is Transitional eNRM Software?

A Transitional eNRM Product is an EMM that the Agency has assessed as meeting the technical requirements of the latest Electronic Prescribing conformance profile, but is not yet integrated with a PDS. eNRM Products which have achieved conformance are listed on the [Transitional eNRM Conformance Register](#).

A Transitional eNRM Product can create legal PBS prescriptions without requiring a paper copy of the prescription. When prescribers use a Transitional eNRM product for medication chart prescriptions, a paper copy of the prescription is not required. However, the eNRM is unable to send the prescription to the PDS. Therefore, Pharmacists must manually transcribe the prescription information from the Transitional eNRM Product into their dispensing software. Pharmacists are not required to print a copy of the chart to document details of the medication supply, so long as this information is captured within electronic pharmacy records.

All RACS may use the funding from the eNRM Adoption grant opportunity to adopt a Transitional conformant eNRM Product. RACS looking to implement an eNRM should check that their eNRM of choice is listed on the [Transitional eNRM Conformance Register](#).

The Transitional Arrangement will continue until broader electronic prescription infrastructure (ie. PDS and dispense software) can support electronic medication charts and vendors achieve Electronic Prescribing conformance.

## How are Transitional eNRM C Products different to Electronic Prescribing Conformant eNRM C Products?

A number of eNRM C products have achieved eNRM C transitional conformance, and are now available for use under the eNRM C Transitional Arrangement. Transitional eNRM C Products are temporary software versions which meet the latest Electronic Prescribing Technical Conformance requirements, but are not yet integrated with a PDS. As integration with a PDS is one of the mandatory requirements for Electronic Prescribing Conformance, the Agency cannot:

- approve the product as compliant with all Electronic Prescribing Conformance Requirements
- give the product a valid Electronic Prescribing Conformance ID
- register the product on the [Electronic Prescribing Conformance Register](#)

Instead, the Agency approve Transitional eNRM C Products on the [Transitional eNRM C Conformance Register](#) and issue a Transitional Arrangement Registration number.

Once PDS and dispensing software are able to support electronic prescribing from medication charts, eNRM C systems will be required to electronically transmit all electronic medication chart prescriptions to dispensing software via a PDS. Dispensing software can then automatically retrieve the prescription information without pharmacists needing to transcribe this information. To integrate to the PDS, eNRM C systems will need to be reassessed and awarded full electronic prescribing conformance.

## What medicines can be prescribed under the Transitional Arrangement?

Summary	Transitional eNRM C	Restrictions
General schedule PBS medicines (no authority requirements)	YES	Nil. Can be prescribed and supplied for duration of chart.
PBS Items requiring <b>Streamlined Authority</b> (Non-Schedule 8)	YES	Nil. Can be prescribed and supplied for duration of chart.
Schedule 8 medicines ( <b>Streamlined</b> )	YES	PBS listing restrictions and maximum quantities must be observed. Cannot be prescribed and supplied for duration of chart.
PBS Items requiring <b>Telephone or Written Authority Approval (including Schedule 8)</b> (For written authority approvals, printed paper copy of the eNRM C must be submitted to Services Australia)	YES	Duration of supply based on PBS authority approval. Prescriber must enter cease date corresponding to authority approval.
PBS Section 100 medicines	NO	Cannot be prescribed using Transitional eNRM C products

State or Territory permits/approvals may be required.

The maximum duration of electronic medication charts is 4 months for Transitional eNRM C Products.

## What does the prescribing, dispensing, and claiming workflow look like under the Transitional Arrangement?

1. The prescriber logs into the Transitional eNRMC Product to create or amend a medication chart prescription. The medication chart order is available in the Transitional eNRMC product in real time.
2. The resident's choice of pharmacy is notified that a new medicine supply is required. The pharmacist logs into the Transitional eNRMC Product to view the medication chart/order. The pharmacist transcribes the electronic medication chart prescription information into their dispensing software.
3. The pharmacist dispenses the medication, identifying the PBS claim as a paper medication chart.
4. The pharmacist sends the medication to the RACS for administration
5. The RACS records all administration events in the medication chart at the point of administration

## What support is available for RACS looking to adopt an eNRMC?

The Australian Government is providing \$30 million in funding over three years to support RACS to implement an eNRMC system. Round 1 of the Grant has now closed, having provided \$16.5 million of funding to RACS. Round 2 will open on 3 July 2023, offering another \$12.5 million in funding. More information concerning the eNRMC Adoption Grant is available on the Department of Health and Aged Care's [website](#).

The Department of Health and Aged Care and Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) have also developed a range of resources to support RACS to select the right eNRMC for their service and safely transition. These materials can be found on the ACSQHC's [website](#).

## What do RACS who are adopting Transitional eNRMC Software under the Transitional Arrangement have to do?

Support materials are available on the ACSQHC's [website](#) to assist RACS to select the best eNRMC system for their service, and safely transition. RACS are strongly encouraged to review these support materials, and consult with their pharmacy/ies and prescribers when selecting an eNRMC system and during implementation.

Once they have selected an eNRMC system, RACS must:

- Check the eNRMC product they want to adopt is listed on the [Transitional eNRMC Conformance Register](#)
- Ensure the Transitional eNRMC Product they want to adopt meets State and Territory requirements and that the relevant jurisdiction has approved its use
- Ensure the Transitional eNRMC Product they want to adopt meets their business requirements and is safe for use in their specific care setting

Once a RACS has adopted a Transitional eNRM Product, the RACS must:

- Ensure they are using the approved software version/s. To do this, RACS should periodically review the Agency's
  - [Electronic Prescribing Conformance Register](#) and
  - [Transitional eNRM Conformance Register](#)
- Inform the Transitional eNRM Product vendor of their servicing pharmacies
- Agree an implementation timeframe with their servicing pharmacy, and prescribers to ensure:
  - they are ready to support the transition to the eNRM selected from the 'go-live' date,
  - they can organise necessary access, and
  - they can complete provided training.

The Department also encourages RACS to:

- Apply for the eNRM Adoption grant opportunity, to receive funding to assist defray costs associated with implementing an eNRM. RACS do not need to have chosen an eNRM system prior to applying.
- Begin to use their Transitional eNRM Product in place of a paper or hybrid system for prescribing, supplying and administration of medicines for residents.

## What do RACSs and prescribers need to do when the Transitional Arrangement ends?

The Department will cease the Transitional Arrangement, in consultation with industry, once PDS and dispensing systems are able to support electronic prescribing from electronic medication charts and vendors can achieve Electronic Prescribing Conformance. When the Transitional Arrangement ends, RACS and prescribers using Trial or Transitional eNRM Products will have several obligations. RACS and prescribers must:

- Ensure they upgrade their eNRM Product to the Electronic Prescribing Conformant version listed on the [Electronic Prescribing Conformance Register](#)
- Inform their servicing pharmacy that they have upgraded to an Electronic Prescribing Conformant eNRM Product
- Be aware that as specified within the [National Health \(Pharmaceutical Benefits\) Regulations 2017](#), the maximum duration for electronic medication chart generated by Electronic Prescribing Conformant eNRM Products are as follows:
  - Trial and Transitional eNRM Product medication charts are valid up to 4 months
  - Electronic Prescribing Conformant eNRM Product medication charts are valid up to 6 months

## Is an eNRM mandatory?

Adoption of an eNRM product is not mandatory and [paper NRMCs](#) continue to be valid medication charts in RACS. Residents or their substitute decision makers should have the opportunity to opt out of electronic medication chart prescribing and ensure choice of their supplying pharmacy. This is consistent with the current [Quality Standard on consumer choice](#). However, the Department encourages the adoption and use of a conformant eNRM product to support safe and accountable medication management.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information concerning the transitional arrangement and eNRM, please contact the department of health at [eNRM@health.gov.au](mailto:eNRM@health.gov.au).  
For clarifications about PBS and RPB claiming information requirements for an eNRM, please contact Services Australia at [devsupport@servicesaustralia.gov.au](mailto:devsupport@servicesaustralia.gov.au)