



Pharmacist Factsheet: Designated Registered Nurse Prescribing

Authorised nurse prescribers will be able to prescribe eligible PBS medicines from 1 December 2026. Pharmacists do not need to change their dispensing workflow - PBS Online will validate prescriber type and item eligibility when the claim is submitted.

Information for pharmacists about PBS prescriptions written by authorised nurse prescribers

Pharmacists - All you need to know

Topic	What pharmacists need to know
Dispensing workflow	Existing dispensing processes continue. Pharmacists continue usual professional and clinical checks and submit PBS claims through dispensing software.
Key dates	1 October 2026: applications open for eligible nurse prescribers to apply for approval as authorised nurse prescribers and receive a PBS prescriber number. 1 December 2026: authorised nurse prescribers can start prescribing eligible PBS medicines, where permitted by state or territory legislation and supported by local governance and software arrangements.
Scope of PBS medicines	Authorised nurse prescribers may prescribe PBS medicines only where the relevant PBS listing includes registered nurses as an approved prescriber type. Additional listings or adjustments to the types of medicines designated RN prescribers may prescribe may be made following the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee consideration.
PBS prescriber number	A PBS prescription from an authorised nurse prescriber must include their PBS prescriber number. Authorised nurse prescribers will receive a PBS prescriber number, not a Medicare provider number.
PBS claiming and validation	PBS Online uses existing validation to check that the prescriber number is validly constructed, the prescriber was active, and the prescriber was eligible to prescribe the PBS item when the prescription was written.
PBS Online changes	There are no new PBS Online claiming fields, web services, structural changes or designated RN-specific rejection codes. The change is the addition of the new prescriber type value in PBS Schedule data.
Prescribing agreements	Designated registered nurse (RN) prescribers prescribe in partnership with an authorised health practitioner under a prescribing agreement. These agreements are managed through local clinical governance arrangements. Pharmacists do not need to verify the agreement or see its details on the prescription.
Paper and electronic prescriptions	For paper prescriptions, authorised nurse prescribers will use the standard PBS nurse and midwife prescription. The qualifications field may not be completed, so pharmacists should submit the claim as usual. PBS Online will validate the prescriber's active status and whether the item is eligible for that prescriber type. For electronic prescriptions and barcoded paper prescriptions, the prescription payload will include the new prescriber type (R) once prescribing software has been updated and rolled out to users.



What is designated RN prescribing?

Designated RN prescribing enables suitably qualified and endorsed RNs to prescribe scheduled medicines in partnership with an authorised health practitioner. A designated RN prescriber is a registered nurse who holds an endorsement for scheduled medicines from the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) and prescribes within their scope of practice, local clinical governance arrangements and relevant Commonwealth, state and territory legislation.

Endorsement is granted by the NMBA following assessment against the relevant registration standard. Once endorsed, the nurse's endorsement details are made available through existing practitioner data feeds used by Services Australia and real-time prescription monitoring systems.

After endorsement, a designated RN prescriber who meets the Commonwealth requirements may become an eligible nurse prescriber and apply to Services Australia for approval as an authorised nurse prescriber. If approved, Services Australia issues a PBS prescriber number and the authorised nurse prescriber is recognised by PBS systems. They do not receive a Medicare provider number through this process.

The PBS Schedule is the source of truth for determining which PBS medicines an authorised nurse prescriber may prescribe. A medicine may be within a nurse's professional or jurisdictional authority but not be eligible for PBS subsidy unless the relevant PBS listing identifies registered nurses as an approved prescriber type

What is changing for pharmacists?

Authorised nurse prescribers will be recognised as a new PBS prescriber type, "Registered Nurses". Their PBS prescriber code will be recorded as "**R**" in PBS data, and registered nurses will be identified as "**RN**" on relevant PBS listings.

Pharmacists should continue to undertake their usual professional and clinical checks when dispensing medicines prescribed by authorised nurse prescribers. Existing dispensing and PBS

claiming processes continue. The main change is that dispensing and claiming software must recognise the new prescriber type value from PBS Schedule data.

Where to get more information

Question	Contact
Information about designated RN prescribing	Program webpage and FAQ
PBS medicines that RNs may prescribe	PBS Schedule
Software updates or functionality	Contact your dispensing software vendor.
PBS claiming support	Use existing Services Australia PBS support channels.
PBS API data enquiries	HPP.Support@health.gov.au
Policy enquiries	HPAD@health.gov.au

Definitions

Designated Registered Nurse Prescriber	An RN who holds an endorsement for scheduled medicines from the NMBA.
Eligible nurse prescriber	A designated RN prescriber who meets Commonwealth requirements to apply for approval as an authorised nurse prescriber.
Authorised Nurse Prescriber	A designated RN prescriber who has been approved under the PBS to prescribe PBS medicines.