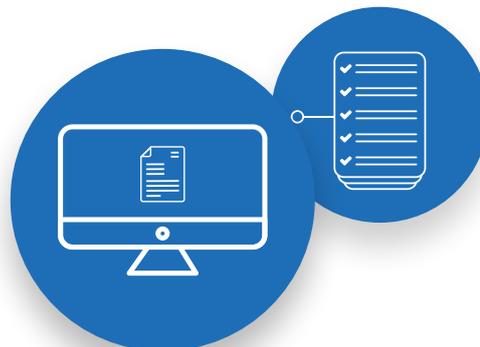


# Electronic Prescribing

Changes to Commonwealth legislation commenced on 31 October 2019 recognising an electronic prescription as an alternative legal form by which medicines can be supplied under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

Previously, only a paper prescription signed by a prescriber has been the legal form by which medicines can be supplied.



## What is electronic prescribing?



Electronic prescribing is an option for prescribers and their patients to use an electronic prescription as an alternative to a paper prescription.



Paper prescriptions and electronic prescriptions will meet the relevant Commonwealth and State and Territory legislation.



Electronic prescribing will not be mandatory. Patients and prescribers will be able to choose either a paper prescription or an electronic prescription.

## What is required for the implementation of electronic prescriptions in Australia?



The Commonwealth Department of Health has developed instruments that identify the form of the electronic prescription, and the information technology requirements for clinical software. Changes have also been made to the PBS claim for payment system to support the new arrangements.



The technical framework details the requirements for developers of clinical software to make changes to their software products. This ensures software will be aligned with the electronic prescribing legislative framework, which ensures adherence to privacy and security principles and maintains patient choice.



States and Territories are working with the Commonwealth to ensure alignment of processes to deliver a nationally consistent electronic prescribing framework.



The technical framework has been co-designed with key stakeholders through the Agency's Electronic Prescribing Technical Working Group. Participants included the medical software industry, health professional peak bodies, consumers, and government.



A new technical framework to support electronic prescriptions has been developed by the Australian Digital Health Agency (the Agency).

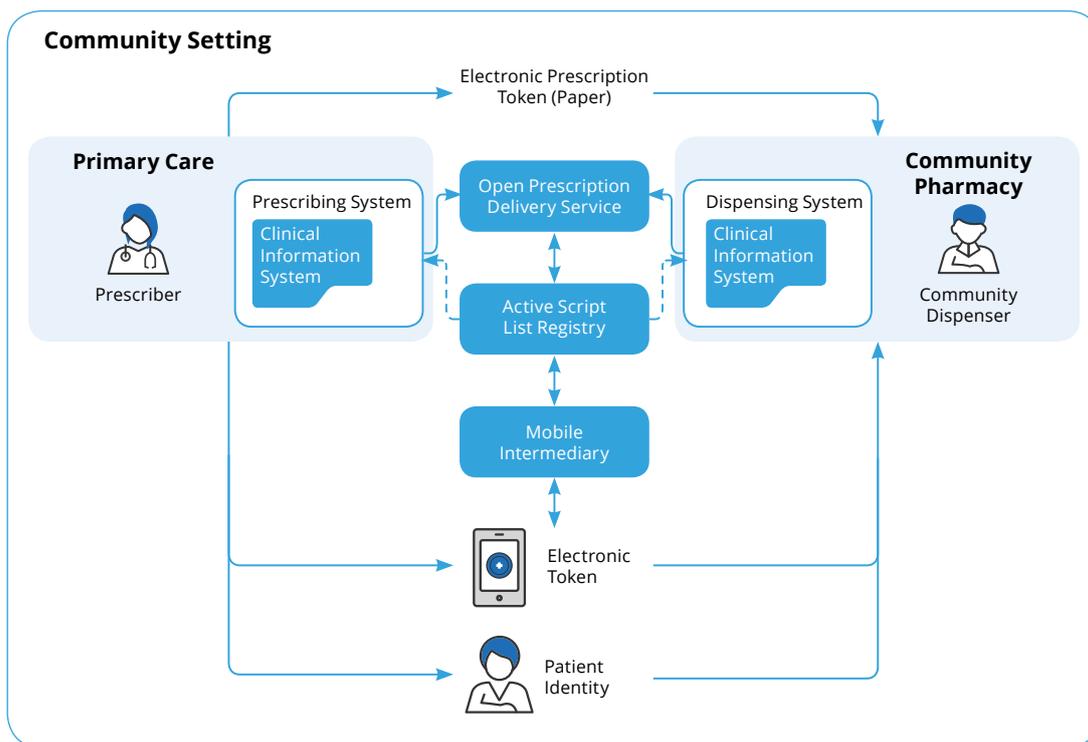


National change and adoption activities are being undertaken to support health professionals, software developers and patients to understand how electronic prescriptions are generated, received and dispensed.

# How is an electronic prescription generated by a prescriber, received by a patient, and dispensed by a dispenser?

- ▶ Prescribing clinical software will allow the prescriber to generate a paper prescription or electronic prescription based on the patient's preference.
- ▶ The technical framework for electronic prescribing supports two complementary models for the patient to have access to their electronic prescription:
  - 1. Token Model:** Patients may elect to manage digital tokens on their mobile devices via SMS, receive a paper token or email, that links to their electronic prescription through a Prescription Delivery Service (PDS).
  - 2. Active Script List Model:** Patients may also access electronic prescriptions through their assertion of identity rather than through presentation of a token. This overcomes the issue of lost tokens and assists medication management and adherence, especially for patients who are taking multiple medicines.
- ▶ A PDS is a system that supports defined interfaces and services that facilitates the transfer of electronic prescriptions and related information between participating software systems.
- ▶ Presentation of a token to a dispenser or access to a patient's Active Script List will enable an authorised dispenser to retrieve the prescription from the PDS and dispense the prescribed medicines. A token is not a legal prescription, but it can be used by an authorised pharmacy to retrieve the legal prescription.
- ▶ An additional 'direct' prescription delivery service is designed primarily for where the transfer of prescription occurs locally within the healthcare organisation, for example in a hospital setting.

**Figure 1: Technical framework for electronic prescribing- Token and Active Script List models.**



## Further Information:

Software developers can download the technical framework documents and access technical support for electronic prescribing via the Agency's Developer Centre  
Website: <https://developer.digitalhealth.gov.au/>

The Department of Health website also provides information about electronic prescribing:  
[www.pbs.gov.au/info/news/2019/09/electronic-prescribing](http://www.pbs.gov.au/info/news/2019/09/electronic-prescribing)