



NACCHO Communiqué

Closing the Gap Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme scripts deadline now extended to 30 June 2022

As of 30 June 2022, Closing the Gap (CTG) PBS scripts will not be available for people who aren't registered correctly with Services Australia (extended from 31 Jan).

A new national registration database run by Services Australia began on 1 July 2021. It aims to make it easier for eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to access medicines through the CTG PBS Co-payment program. Patients only need to be registered for the program once in their lifetime via Health Professional Online Services (HPOS), to get free or reduced cost PBS medicines from any community pharmacy in Australia, without the need for each script to be marked 'CTG'.

The issue

Unfortunately, not all patients who previously received CTG prescriptions were transferred to the new database, resulting in some people paying more for their medicines. Potentially many thousands of people who have previously had CTG scripts are still affected.

In response to this issue, the Australian Government has now allowed people who had previously received CTG scripts but are not registered on the new database, to continue to access these **until 30 June 2022**. This is an additional extension from the original date of 31 January 2022, and has been extended due to the pressure on the health system responding to the current Omicron outbreak.

What needs to be done?

NACCHO is urging all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to talk with their health service, GP and/or pharmacy to check if they are correctly registered for the program on the new registration database. **If this is not resolved by July 2022, then the cost of that person's medicines will increase.**

Health service providers, including Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) and GPs, may want to communicate directly with their local pharmacies to see if they have received PBS warnings on their dispensing systems (*warning code 810*). Pharmacists can check if patients are registered, but only PBS prescribers or Ahpra registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners can register patients via the Services Australia HPOS portal.

For more information, NACCHO maintains a [webpage](#) on the CTG reforms and can run workshops for ACCHOs wishing to know more about the measure, registration system and upcoming deadline. Services Australia information [here](#).