



Australian Government
Department of Health and Aged Care



Australian Government
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

Dear Approved Provider

RE: Medication Management in Residential Aged Care

The Department of Health and Aged Care (the department) and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (the Commission) have been made aware of instances where pharmacy charges for medication packaging and delivery are being passed on to permanent aged care residents. We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of your obligations as approved providers of Australian Government funded residential aged care.

As you know, as an Approved Provider of residential care, you must ensure the safe and effective delivery of quality care and services in accordance with the requirements of the *Aged Care Act 1997*, the *Quality of Care Principles 2014*, and the *User Rights Principles 2014*.

With regard to medication management, aged care homes are required to assist residents to take medication and ensure it is in line with the directions of health professionals. Aged care homes must also have a medication administration system in place to ensure the safe administration of medication to the right residents in the correct quantities at the correct times (refer to [Guiding principles for medication management in residential aged care facilities](#)). You must also have a system for safe ordering, reordering, storage and administration of medicines.

These costs are reflected in your AN-ACC funding, are the responsibility of the approved provider and **cannot be passed onto the resident**. If you have a commercial arrangement in place with a specific pharmacy, and the pharmacy requests any changes (such as increase their fees), you may wish to consider alternative pharmacies to supply medications to manage costs.

Whilst you are required to ensure prescriptions are filled, the resident is required to cover the cost of the medications. Normal [Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme \(PBS\)](#) subsidies and safety net arrangements still apply to residents.

It is also important to be aware that residents do have the right to have their medications supplied by a pharmacy of their choice if they wish. In the event a resident has taken this option, we encourage you to engage with residents about their decision and ensure they are aware they may face additional costs. It should also be reiterated to residents the aged care home can offer a suitable alternative to supply medications to reduce the possibility of additional charges should they wish to change their current arrangements.

The department will be communicating this information with consumer representative bodies, however, we would encourage you to ensure residents are aware of their rights with respect to both prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Additionally, as you know the Commission, as the national regulator of aged care services, is responsible for monitoring providers' performance against the Aged Care Quality Standards (the Quality Standards) and the responsibilities listed under Chapter 4 of Aged Care Act. Where the Commission identifies non-compliance, it will respond in a way that is proportionate to the issues identified which, depending on the extent of non-compliance, may involve enforcement action.

More information about the obligations of Approved Providers can be found at: <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/providers>. To learn more about the regulatory actions that the Commission can take, please visit our website: <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/>.

Yours sincerely,



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Ageing and Aged Care Group
Department of Health and Aged Care

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Janet Anderson PSM
Aged Care Quality and Safety
Commissioner
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

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