Australian Government

Comcare

COMCARE PHARMACY POLICY

Comcare can pay for the appropriate cost of medications prescribed by a legally qualified medical practitioner (LQMP) or dentist for the treatment of an injured worker's compensable condition. Reference—*Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (sections 4 and 16).

MEDICATIONS COMCARE CAN PAY FOR

Comcare can pay for the appropriate cost of medications which are:

> requested or prescribed by a medical practitioner or registered dentist, and provided by a registered pharmacist

> reasonably required due to a compensable condition

> provided in accordance with the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)—www.health.gov.au/PBS

> provided as a 'private prescription' if the medicine is clinically appropriate and not available on the PBS.

MEDICATIONS COMCARE WILL NOT PAY FOR

Comcare will not pay for medications:

> for a person other than the injured worker

> for which there is no clinical justification

> that are not related to a workplace injury.

PBS MEDICATIONS

Injured workers are able to receive medications under the PBS. Where an injured worker is entitled to access the PBS, Comcare will fund all patient contributions set out in the PBS, including brand or therapeutic premiums i.e. the maximum price to the consumer.

Injured workers should present their Medicare card and/or Healthcare card to the dispensing pharmacist.

Comcare will only pay for non-PBS (privately prescribed) medications if the medications are clinically appropriate for the compensable condition and there is no readily available alternative on the PBS.

Note: Where injured workers are not eligible for access to the PBS, Comcare will pay the appropriate cost of the required prescription medications.

Refer to the Medicare Australia website for further information on the PBS.

MAXIMUM THERAPEUTIC DOSE

The maximum therapeutic dose and frequency for all medications is included in the specific consumer product information. Generally, Comcare will only pay for medications up to the maximum therapeutic dose as recommended by the manufacturer. Comcare may pay for more than the recommended dose of over-the-counter and prescription medication if it is clinically justified by the prescribing medical practitioner or dentist, in accordance with current clinical practice guidelines.

Note: The prescribing medical practitioner or dentist must obtain an authority from Medicare Australia if they are prescribing more than the maximum therapeutic dose for prescription medicines on the PBS. Comcare will not pay for a private script in this situation.

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QUANTITY RESTRICTIONS

Pharmacists must supply medications—particularly medications where addiction and tolerance are a risk—according to the medical practitioner's or dentist's instructions. If the injured worker requires an increase in the prescribed quantity, the pharmacist should refer them back to their medical practitioner or dentist for a prescription to cover exceptional circumstances. Comcare will only pay for larger than usual quantities of medications in exceptional circumstances.

If a medical practitioner or dentist believes exceptional circumstances apply, Comcare may consider paying for the medication if:

> provided with written clinical justification to enable assessment of whether to accept liability
> the maximum quantity of medications to be paid for does not exceed the dosage to be taken over 12 weeks, and/or
> the prescription is endorsed by the medical practitioner in accordance with Regulation 24 of the PBS Guidelines for dispensing repeat quantities.

Important: This policy does not apply to Schedule 8 medications (controlled medicines). See below for Schedule 8 policy.

SCHEDULE 8 MEDICATIONS (CONTROLLED MEDICINES) RESTRICTIONS

Comcare will ordinarily only pay for Schedule 8 medications (controlled medicines) when they are prescribed through the PBS. Schedule 8 medications are subject to a high risk of abuse and paying for these on private scripts reduces the effectiveness of the governmental systems in place to monitor their use.

If a medical practitioner believes a PBS medication is not suitable, they must provide written clinical justification to Comcare for consideration prior to prescribing the medication. If Comcare does not accept liability based on the justification provided, the injured worker is responsible for the cost of the Schedule 8 medication.

CLAIMING PHARMACY EXPENSES

Injured workers must provide original receipts from a registered pharmacy and attach these to a Comcare *Medical services claim form* for Comcare to process a claim for medications.

DIRECT BILLING ACCOUNTS

Any direct billing account submitted to Comcare for payment must contain the following information.

Payee details	Patient details	Medication details
> Pharmacy name > Billing address > Payment address (if different to the business address) > Invoice number and date > Total amount charged	> Family name and given name(s) > Address > Claim number (if not known then provide patient's date of birth and date of accident)	> Date dispensed > PBS item code number (if applicable) > A copy of the original script for private script medications > A copy of the repeat authorisation, where appropriate (for private medications only) > Full description of item (including script number, brand name and medication form) > Quantity of medication dispensed > Medication strength (where applicable) > Amount charged per item

ACCOUNT SUBMISSION

Accounts should be a dispensary computer-generated tax invoice and must be addressed to Comcare. The type of item—for example, over-the-counter (OTC)—may be handwritten onto the tax invoice.

Before submitting an account to Comcare:

> ensure the injured worker has an accepted Comcare claim
> check that only one name appears on each account
> remove receipts or client history reports.

PRIVACY INFORMATION

For information about how we handle personal information, please visit www.comcare.gov.au/privacy or contact us on 1300 366 979 and request a copy of our Privacy Policy.