



# Closing the Gap – The PBS Co-Payment Measure

The Closing the Gap Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) Co-Payment Measure is an assistance package aiming to increase access to PBS medicines for eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders living with, or at risk of, chronic disease/s.

The assistance measure operates in the form of lower or nil patient co-payments for PBS listed medicines.

## Eligibility

The Closing the Gap (CTG) measure is intended to benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of any age who present with an existing chronic disease or are at risk of developing a chronic disease and, in the opinion of the prescriber:

- would experience setbacks in the prevention or ongoing management of chronic disease if they did not take the prescribed medicine; and
- are unlikely to adhere to their medicines regimen without assistance through the CTG measure.

Eligible patients can be registered at either:

- general practices participating in the Indigenous Health Incentive under the Practice Incentives Program (PIP); or
- Indigenous Health Services (IHS) in urban and rural settings.

## Annotation of prescriptions

When a patient is registered for the CTG measure and the prescriber grants the benefits of the CTG measure to the patient, the prescriber will annotate the patient's prescription to indicate that it is to be dispensed with co-payment relief.

CTG prescriptions will either have an automated annotation or a manual annotation.

Under the CTG measure, general (non-concessional) patients presenting a CTG prescription will be charged the current concessional rate for each PBS item on that prescription.

Concessional patients presenting a CTG prescription do not pay a patient co-payment for each PBS item on that prescription. However, mandatory charges, such as any applicable brand premiums, must still be paid by the patient.

If a patient presents as an eligible PBS co-payment patient but does not have an annotated prescription confirming their eligibility, the pharmacy will need to refer the patient back to the prescribing medical practitioner.

## Who can annotate a CTG prescription?

The following prescribing medical practitioners are eligible to provide their patients with a CTG annotated script:

- Any medical practitioner working in a practice that is participating in the Indigenous Health Incentive under the PIP.
- Any medical practitioner working in IHS in rural or urban settings.

Any medical specialist in any practice location provided the patient is eligible under the CTG – PBS Co-payment Measure, and has been referred by a medical practitioner working in a practice that is participating in the Indigenous Health Incentive/PBS Co-Payment Measure under the PIP.

Whilst all care has been taken in preparing this document, this information is a guide only and subject to change without notice.