

# Electronic Prescribing Frequently Asked Questions

Electronic prescriptions (eScripts) are an alternative to paper prescriptions. eScripts are accessed by a token in the form of a QR code which is sent to the patient as an SMS or email, or can be printed on paper.

## How do I set up electronic prescribing?

Prescribers must be using conformant clinical software and be registered with the National Prescription Delivery Service managed by eRx Script Exchange.

## What are the benefits for patients?

- no need to store or carry paper documents
- can hold multiple eScript tokens on conformant smartphone applications such as my health app
- enables online ordering and delivery of medication
- automatically added to the Active Script List

## What are the benefits for prescribers?

- no longer need to print and sign paper prescriptions
- facilitates virtual care and telehealth services
- enables greater control to cancel, modify or reissue prescriptions
- prevents scripts from being dispensed more than once

## What are the benefits for pharmacists?

- no need to manually transcribe prescription data into dispensing software
- can dispense eScripts from an Active Script List like MySL

## Can patients still get paper prescriptions?

Patients can choose to receive either a paper prescription or an eScript. A copy of an eScript token can also be printed for patients that would like a paper record. This will not look like a traditional paper prescription.

## How long does it take to send an eScript?

eScripts are sent immediately and usually received by the patient's nominated phone or email address within seconds.

## Is there a cost for sending eScripts by SMS or email?

eScripts are transmitted via the Prescription Delivery Service managed by eRx Script Exchange. There are no costs (including SMS) for patients, prescribers or pharmacies.

## Can a patient have both an eScript and a paper script for the same item?

No, a prescription can only be one or the other for the entirety of the script. If an eScript has repeats, then a new token is sent to the patient via SMS or email by the pharmacy.

## Does a patient on multiple medications require multiple eScript tokens?

Yes, each token is for a single prescribed item. Patients with multiple prescriptions may benefit from registering for an Active Script List.

## Is there an expiry on the eScript token?

The expiry date for eScript tokens is the same for paper prescriptions i.e. usually 12 months from the date it was created or 6 months in the case of Schedule 8 prescriptions.

## What is an Active Script List or MySL?

An Active Script List (ASL) is a consolidated list of the patients active eScripts including repeats. Once a patient has registered for an ASL at a pharmacy, they can then authorise any pharmacy to access and dispense their eScripts from their ASL without presenting the eScript tokens.

An Active Script List may also be referred to as MySL.  
**Can repeats be accessed from the original token?**

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No. The original token will be deactivated once the first course is dispensed. If a patient has repeats on a prescription, the pharmacy will send them a new token for their next repeat. When it is time to get their next supply, the patient will need to present the new token or ask the pharmacy to access their Active Script List.

### What happens if a patient loses their eScript token?

If the patient is registered with an Active Script List, they can ask the pharmacy to dispense their eScripts without needing to present a token.

Otherwise, the patient will need to ask for the eScript to be resent. For original prescriptions, the prescriber can resend. For repeats, the patient will need to contact the pharmacy that issued the repeat.

### Are all eScripts available in the Active Script List?

Yes, all eScripts are sent to the Active Script List (ASL) by default when the prescription is created. If a patient does not want a particular eScript to appear in their ASL they need to ask the prescriber to untick this in their software before the eScript is sent.

### Can a carer receive the eScript token on behalf of the person they care for?

Yes, the patient can forward the SMS or email containing the eScript token to their carer/agent. Alternatively, the patient may also ask their prescriber to send the token directly to their carer/agent, during the consultation.

### Can patients without a Medicare number / IHI number use eScripts?

An individual health identifier (IHI) number is required to use eScripts. All individuals enrolled in Medicare or the Department of Veterans' Affairs are assigned an IHI automatically. If a patient does not have a Medicare or DVA number, they can [apply for an IHI from Services Australia](#).

### Can patients without a smartphone use eScripts?

Yes, they can forward the SMS or email eScript to a

family member, friend or carer to assist them with collecting their medicines if they do not have a smartphones or access to the internet on their phone. Patients can also nominate someone to receive the eScript on their behalf.

Alternatively, patients can register for an Active Script List to enable the pharmacy to dispense the eScript without needing to present the eScript token.

### How can patients manage their eScripts?

There are apps available for storing eScript tokens so that they are easier to locate on your phone. The My Health App is a free government app for storing eScript tokens and also links to the My Health Record.

Patients that find it difficult to keep track of their tokens and do not want to use an app can have their eScripts dispensed without the token by registering for an Active Script List.

### How secure are eScripts?

The eScript token contains only the initials of the patient, the name of the medicine and the number of repeats. When the QR code is scanned by a valid dispensing service with the required connectivity and authorising processes in place, the prescription details can be pulled from the Prescription Delivery Service into the dispensing system.

### What do I do if I prescribed the wrong medication / dose?

You can modify or cancel an eScript from the patient record to inactivate the eScript. This will allow you to send a new eScript token to the patient.

### Can I re-prescribe on the same day if I need to cancel the eScript?

Yes, you can cancel the eScript and re-prescribe it as needed on the same day. The cancelled eScript may need to be deleted from the past prescriptions view to prevent the software from considering this a duplicate prescription. Check with your software provider which steps are required.

### Can I send the eScript direct to the pharmacy?

Most eScripts should be sent to the patient. They can then forward the eScript to a pharmacy for dispensing. If the pharmacy is unable to locate the eScript,

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patients registered for an Active Script List will be able to authorise the pharmacy to access and dispense the eScript without the token.

If sending direct to a pharmacy, check with the pharmacy on their preferred method of receiving eScripts.

### Can I see if a medication has been dispensed?

Health professionals that are authorised to access the My Health Record system can check prescription and dispense records from the Medicines Information tile.

### Further information

If you would like more information on electronic prescribing, Active Script Lists or the My Health App, visit the [Electronic Prescribing for Prescribers webpage](#) on the Australian Digital Health Agency website or refer to [Clinician Assist WA – Electronic Prescribing](#) (individual login required, to register visit [Clinician Assist WA](#)).

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