



## Media release

5 June 2019

### Record number of sign ups to My Health Record in Australian pharmacies

Australian pharmacies have signed up to the My Health Record system in record numbers over the past year, according to new data released today by the Australian Digital Health Agency.

In April 2018, prior to the beginning of the opt-out period, only 33% of pharmacies were registered with My Health Record, which climbed to 83% as at April 2019. Pharmacists are also uploading and viewing My Health Record more often, with a 667% increase in the number of dispense records uploaded to My Health Record and a 942% increase in the number of record views, comparing April 2018 to April 2019.

Jurisdiction	% registered to access My Health Record	
	April 2018	April 2019
New South Wales	34%	84%
Victoria	29%	82%
Queensland	39%	89%
South Australia	26%	93%
Western Australia	27%	74%
Tasmania	57%	97%
Australian Capital Territory	8%	76%
Northern Territory	58%	97%

When a pharmacy is connected to the My Health Record system, pharmacists can upload a patient's medicines information to their My Health Record, each time the medicines are dispensed. Pharmacists can check to see whether that patient's medications have changed recently, by viewing any hospital discharge summaries in the patient's record. The real-time updates can help other pharmacists and healthcare providers gain visibility of what medications patients are taking, and help those providers make more informed decisions about those patients' care.

Over 250,000 Australians are hospitalised each year because of medication errors, inappropriate use, misadventure or interactions, according to the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's (PSA) [Medicine Safety: Take Care](#) report.

"A large percentage of these hospitalisations could be prevented with better information about a patient's medications. A patient's medication profile can change suddenly, particularly if the patient has presented to hospital. These sudden changes can lead to new risks if the treating team doesn't know all of the medicines that the patient was taking beforehand," says PSA National President Dr Chris Freeman.

"My Health Record can help pharmacists stay on top of what medicines patients are taking, even when they change suddenly. By connecting to My Health Record, pharmacists will be able to better manage medicine safety, and provide invaluable information to other healthcare providers to ensure optimal outcomes for patients."

Samantha Bowen, a pharmacist practicing in the Blue Mountains, recently picked up on a potentially dangerous medication error after viewing a patient's My Health Record.



“I recently saw a patient who had been discharged from our local hospital with a number of new medicines. The patient’s GP had not yet seen the discharge summary and had given prescriptions for his old medications, unaware of the changes. When I checked that patient’s discharge summary via My Health Record, I noticed the discrepancy and contacted the GP, who wrote new prescriptions,” says Bowen.

“As a pharmacist, My Health Record provides us with information about a patient’s medications, medical conditions and allergies that we’ve never had all in one place before. My Health Record makes it easier for us to ensure our patients don’t end up in hospital as a result of medication mismanagement.”

“The Agency has invested heavily to connect pharmacies to the My Health Record system to help reduce the number of medication-related hospitalisations each year,” says Agency Chief Medical Adviser, Clinical Professor Meredith Makeham.

“It can be easy to lose track of your medicines, particularly if you’re taking more than one and don’t have a regular GP or pharmacist to help you keep on top of what medicines you need.

“My Health Record ensures that no matter where you are, or which healthcare provider you see, your medication details are available in one place. This visibility helps pharmacists, and all healthcare providers that use My Health Record, to make more informed decisions when providing treatment or care.”

Registering for My Health Record is the first step for an organisation to gain secure access to the system and start uploading information.

The Agency has a large program to work with healthcare provider organisations across the country to connect healthcare provider organisations to the My Health Record system after they have registered their interest.

Healthcare organisations that would like to register and connect to My Health Record can find more information on the [My Health Record website](#).

**ENDS**

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#### **About the Australian Digital Health Agency**

The Agency is tasked with improving health outcomes for all Australians through the delivery of digital healthcare systems, and implementing [Australia’s National Digital Health Strategy – Safe, Seamless, and Secure: evolving health and care to meet the needs of modern Australia](#) in collaboration with partners across the community. The Agency is the System Operator of [My Health Record](#), and provides leadership, coordination, and delivery of a collaborative and innovative approach to utilising technology to support and enhance a clinically safe and connected national health system. These improvements will give individuals more control of their health and their health information, and support healthcare providers to deliver informed healthcare through access to current clinical and treatment information. Further information: [www.digitalhealth.gov.au](http://www.digitalhealth.gov.au).