

Patient:

Date:

Medicines Access Programs

What are Medicines Access Programs?

Public hospitals and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) cannot fund the supply of all medicines. Hospitals may need to use special programs called Medicines Access Programs (MAPs) to supply new or high-cost medicines. MAPs lower the cost of these medicines so the hospital can supply them. Supply of these special MAP medicines often differs from the normal way you get your medicines.

MAPs are special contracts between:



hospital
doctors



public
hospitals



and the companies that
make the medicines
(pharmaceutical companies).

There are many types of MAPs, and each has its own rules. MAPs also go by other names such as:

- cost-share agreements
- compassionate supply
- product familiarisation programs.

Before you can get the medicine, there is an approval process that must take place. This makes sure that everyone agrees on how to supply the medicine and for how long.

What happens

Your doctor will talk with you or your carer about:



- how the MAP medicine may help
- possible bad reactions (side effects) of the medicine
- any questions you or your carer may have
- why we need to use a MAP to get the medicine.

If you or your carer agree this is the right choice, your doctor will apply to use the medicine.

If approved, a member of your health care team will talk with you or your carer about:



- how and when to get the medicine
- how to take or give the medicine
- how you will know if the medicine is working
- any tests needed such as blood tests and scans
- if there is any cost to you. See ["Do I have to pay for the MAP medicine?"](#)

Your healthcare team can consist of doctors, nurses, pharmacists and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers.

Researchers are often still studying MAP medicines. So, pharmaceutical companies may ask for details such as:



- if the medicine is working for you
- if you are getting any bad reactions
- test results to check on how well the medicine is working (e.g. blood tests, scans).
- age and gender

Your healthcare team will talk with you about this before you start the medicine.



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What to do

It is important for you or your carer to:



- think about the choices
- note down [any questions](#)
- talk about the care plan with your doctor.

5 Questions
to ask



You or your carer may need to sign a patient consent form. The consent form will make sure you understand the possible risks and costs of the medicine. Your hospital will keep the signed form in your records.

You or your carer can decide to stop using the MAP medicine at any time.

If you want to stop, talk to your doctor in case you need to stop the medicine slowly.

Where to get the medicine



If approved, the hospital's pharmacy will source, store and give you the MAP medicine. In special cases, such as when you live in a remote area, you may get it from a local pharmacy. Please note the medicine may not be on hand if you go to a new hospital.

Talk to your healthcare team if you plan to move or want to change hospitals.

Do I have to pay for the MAP medicine?



The hospital will let you know about any costs you need to pay. Sometimes, the MAP medicine will be free, or the hospital may ask you to pay a set price. The price can change between hospitals.

What happens if the MAP ends or the medicine is not approved or not available?

If the MAP ends, the hospital or your local pharmacy may be able to supply the medicine without a MAP. In some cases, the MAP medicine may not get approved or the medicine may no longer be available. If this happens your healthcare team will talk with you about:

- trying to get the medicine a different way
- switching to a new medicine or exploring other treatments
- moving to a private healthcare service (noting there might be extra costs*).

*Note: private services are often very costly. Ask what the costs will be before moving to a private service.

Where to get more information

For more advice on MAPs, please talk to your:



- doctor
- pharmacist
- nurse
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Health Worker.

Please be aware that pharmaceutical companies will often give general advice about MAPs but cannot guide you on your care. **To know if MAPs are a choice for you, talk to your healthcare team.**

If you have any questions about your MAP please call:

Name:

Telephone:

CATAG presents the information in this document with all due care. CATAG accepts no responsibility for any loss, claim or damage as a result of using this information. This information does not replace medical advice.

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