

Changes to co-payments for Section 100 Highly Specialised Drugs in NSW

From 1 October 2015, co-payments for Section 100 (s100) Highly Specialised Drugs will be paid by the NSW Government for NSW residents who are patients of NSW public hospitals or authorised community prescribers in NSW.

This means that patients treated by NSW public hospitals or by authorised community prescribers in NSW will no longer need to pay the patient co-payment for s100 Highly Specialised Drugs.

The NSW Government will pay the co-payment for s100 Highly Specialised Drugs for eligible patients that choose to get their s100 Highly Specialised Drugs dispensed in community pharmacies under the community access arrangements of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). From 1 July 2015, HIV antiretroviral therapy, Hepatitis B medicines and clozapine (maintenance therapy) are listed under the community access arrangements which can be dispensed from community pharmacies. A full list of community access s100 Highly Specialised Drugs is listed on the **PBS website**.

Who is eligible?

The changes apply to NSW residents treated by NSW public hospitals or by authorised community prescribers in NSW, who are prescribed s100 Highly Specialised Drugs under Section 100 of the *National Health Act 1953*.

This includes public non-admitted patients, outpatients or day patients, inpatients on discharge from public hospitals and privately referred, non-admitted patients treated in NSW public hospitals.

There will be no changes to co-payments for s100 Highly Specialised Drugs for patients who access care in the private sector in NSW. Changes to Section 100 co-payments in NSW do not apply to items listed under the general schedule of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

The s100 Highly Specialised Drug co-payments will be paid for eligible patients by the NSW Government regardless of whether prescriptions are filled through NSW public hospitals or community pharmacies.

Why are co-payments being paid for by the NSW Government?

The NSW Government made the commitment to pay co-payments for s100 Highly Specialised Drugs in March 2015 to help ease the financial burden for people with some cancers and other chronic conditions.

This will benefit people living with cancer, as well as those with conditions such as HIV, patients with organ and tissue transplants, schizophrenia, hepatitis, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, cystic fibrosis, psoriatic and rheumatoid arthritis, and severe allergic asthma and rare diseases, particularly those affecting children, including juvenile idiopathic arthritis.

What are s100 Highly Specialised Drugs?

s100 Highly Specialised Drugs are medicines used to treat chronic conditions. Due to the clinical complexities and risks associated with s100 Highly Specialised Drugs, supply is generally restricted to public and private hospitals with appropriate specialist facilities, however some can be accessed through community pharmacies. Authorisation from the Commonwealth Government is required to prescribe or dispense s100 Highly Specialised Drugs.

A full list of s100 Highly Specialised Drugs is available on the **PBS website**.

How do I fill my prescription?

Prescriptions for s100 Highly Specialised Drugs can be filled through NSW public hospital pharmacies. From 1 July 2015, some s100 Highly Specialised Drugs prescriptions can also be filled through community pharmacies.

When you fill your prescription at a NSW public hospital or community pharmacy you will need to present a signed consent form to the pharmacist with your prescription (including any repeats). One patient consent form is valid for 12 months from the date signed by you and covers all prescriptions filled during that time period.

Your doctor or community prescriber will provide you with a completed form that you will need to present to the pharmacist with your prescription. The patient consent form will need to be presented with the s100 Highly Specialised Drug prescription each time the prescription is filled, including any repeats. Once signed by you the form is valid for a period of 12 months. You will need to ensure that as you near the expiry of 12 months you obtain further consent from a prescriber/your doctor.

Once signed by the patient and the prescriber, this form will allow the NSW Government to pay the co-payment contribution on your behalf. You will need to present the form each time you fill your prescription. If your patient consent form becomes lost, damaged or illegible, it is your responsibility to obtain a new consent form from your prescriber.

For urgent supplies, you should visit your nearest hospital pharmacy or call your community pharmacy ahead of time to ensure they have available stock or can order it in.

Why do I have to fill in a consent form?

When you receive a prescription for s100 Highly Specialised Drugs from a NSW Public hospital prescriber or authorised community prescriber in NSW, you will need to sign a consent form. This form will indicate your agreement for the NSW Government to pay the co-payment on your behalf and acknowledge that some details of the dispensing will be collected for monitoring processes. This form will indicate to the pharmacist that you are eligible.

More information

Patients should talk to their doctor or prescriber about whether this commitment will affect them and how they normally fill prescriptions for s100 Highly Specialised Drugs.

For more information visit the NSW Health webpage <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pharmaceutical/Pages/s100-copayments.aspx>.