



CMI's– THE PATIENT HAS A RIGHT TO KNOW

Pharmacies with a PBS approval number receive payment for providing Consumer Medicine Information (CMI's) to consumers. The Australian Pharmacy Council is concerned that Pharmacy Registering Authorities are receiving calls from consumers concerned that they have not been provided with essential information about medication dispensed for them.

Since 1 December 2005, incentive payments for providing CMI have been included in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS) dispensing fees, at the rate of 10 cents per subsidised paid prescription. If pharmacies are not providing CMI's they are receiving payment for an activity that has not been completed.

Providing CMI is essential to promoting the quality use of medicines to patients. When a prescription is dispensed, the pharmacist should be satisfied that the patient understands how to use the medication correctly. This includes the pharmacist counselling the patient or the patient's agent and/or providing written information.

Consumers are becoming increasingly aware of their right to have appropriate and up to date information provided to help them make informed decisions about their health and this includes written information on the medicines they take. Pharmaceutical Defence Limited has cautioned against withholding CMIs unless the pharmacist has formed an opinion that the consumer's physical or mental health may be harmed by information contained in a CMI and the pharmacist has discussed the possible risks with the prescriber and consulted their insurer on the presenting circumstances.

Further information about the Australian Pharmaceutical Advisory Council Guidelines on this subject refer to www.health.gov.au (search for National Medicines Policy and APAC publications).

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