



Community  
Pharmacy  
Agreement

# RURAL PHARMACY MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (RPMA)

*Effective from 1 July 2015*

Programme Specific Guidelines are currently available in draft form and will shortly be updated to comply with the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines. Updates to these programme guidelines will not change the intent of this programme, but will provide additional clarity for participants. This programme will continue to operate under these draft guidelines until updated programme guidelines are published.

# PROGRAMME SPECIFIC GUIDELINES



Australian Government  
Department of Health



The Pharmacy  
Guild of Australia

## PROGRAMME SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction.....	3
2	Background.....	3
3	Participation Requirements.....	3
	3.1 Community Pharmacy Eligibility.....	3
	3.2 Community Pharmacy Obligations.....	3
4	Applying for the RPMA.....	4
	4.1 Applying for the first time.....	4
	4.2 Annual Renewal.....	4
5	Payments.....	4
6	Exceptional Circumstances.....	5
7	Resources.....	5
	Contact Details.....	5

DRAFT

## PROGRAMME SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the Programme Specific Guidelines governing the Rural Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance (RPMA) Programme. This document must be read in conjunction with the 6CPA General Terms and Conditions. Definitions in the 6CPA General Terms and Conditions apply in these Programme Specific Guidelines.

RPMA supports improved access to Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medicines and pharmacy services for people in rural and remote regions of Australia, through the provision of a support allowance which recognises the additional financial burden of maintaining a pharmacy in these areas.

RPMA is part of the suite of Rural Support Programs funded under the Sixth Community Pharmacy Agreement to support targeted programmes and services which improve access to PBS medicines and services for people living in rural and remote regions of Australia.

### 2. BACKGROUND

The RPMA was introduced under the Third Community Pharmacy Agreement in recognition of the additional financial burden of maintaining a pharmacy in rural or remote areas of Australia. The monthly allowance is paid to eligible proprietors of pharmacies approved under Section 90 of the *National Health Act 1953*.

The allowance is calculated annually, based on the remoteness of the pharmacy according to the [Pharmacy Accessibility Remoteness Index of Australia](#) (PhARIA), and the level of PBS and Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS) prescription volumes. Pharmacies with low prescription volumes in more remote areas receive the highest level of the allowance.

### 3. PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

#### 3.1 Community Pharmacy Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in the RPMA Programme a pharmacy must have:

- a) a Section 90 Pharmacy approval;
- b) a prescription volume under the upper limit of the RPMA Payment Matrix. The latest version of the RPMA Payment Matrix can be found at [www.6cpa.com.au](http://www.6cpa.com.au)
- c) opening hours, with a Registered Pharmacist in attendance for a minimum of:
  - 20 hours per week;
  - four (4) days each week; and
  - 48 weeks of each allowance year.

The pharmacy must be located in one of the following PhARIA categories to be deemed eligible:

- PhARIA 2 – Accessible group 1
- PhARIA 3 – Accessible group 2
- PhARIA 4 – Moderately accessible
- PhARIA 5 – Remote
- PhARIA 6 – Very Remote

The PhARIA is effective for the allowance year and any changes to the PhARIA categories will be included in the annual revision of the allowance.

Failure to maintain compliance with any or all of the above Eligibility Criteria may result in the Eligible Community Pharmacy being ineligible to participate in the RPMA Programme.

#### 3.2 Community Pharmacy Obligations

An Eligible Community Pharmacy must notify the Guild immediately when it becomes aware of any circumstance, event or fact which may affect eligibility to participate in the RPMA Programme.

Eligible Community Pharmacies must notify the Guild within fourteen (14) days if their Section 90 number changes or becomes inactive or their opening hours are to be reduced below the minimum hours stated in clause 2 of these Guidelines.

If the Guild is not notified of these changes within fourteen (14) days then the following may apply:

- a) ongoing monthly payments may be suspended or cancelled; or
- b) payments made since the reduction in opening hours may be recovered.

**REMINDER**  
 Notify the Guild within 14 days if your pharmacy's Section 90 number changes or becomes inactive.

## PROGRAMME SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

### 4. APPLYING FOR THE RPMA

Eligible Community Pharmacy Registration is available via the 6CPA Registration and Claiming Portal at [www.6cpa.com.au](http://www.6cpa.com.au).

An Eligible Community Pharmacy will not be registered until the Eligible Community Pharmacy receives an email notification from the 6CPA Registration and Claiming Portal confirming the registration has been accepted.

#### 4.1 Applying for the first time

An Eligible Community Pharmacy applying for the RPMA for the first time is required to complete the **Rural Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance Application** form.

#### HINT

Put 'RPMA' in the subject line of your email when submitting your Application or Certification Statement to [support@6cpa.com.au](mailto:support@6cpa.com.au)

The completed Application must be submitted via email to [support@6cpa.com.au](mailto:support@6cpa.com.au) with **RPMA** in the subject line.

Eligible Community Pharmacies will receive confirmation of accepted applications via the email address provided during the registration process on the 6CPA

Registration and Claiming Portal.

#### 4.2 Annual Renewal

Each year an Eligible Community Pharmacy receiving the RPMA payment is required to submit a completed **Rural Pharmacy Maintenance Allowance Certification Statement** to confirm the Community Pharmacy's eligibility to continue receiving RPMA payments in the next financial year.

The completed Certification Statement must be submitted by **14 June** of the current financial year via email to [support@6cpa.com.au](mailto:support@6cpa.com.au) with **RPMA** in the subject line.

If the RPMA Certification Statement is not submitted within the required timeframe RPMA payments may be delayed or ceased.

### 5. PAYMENTS

The RPMA is calculated each year from 1 July and paid monthly to Eligible Community Pharmacies, based on the RPMA Payment Matrix for that financial year. The current RPMA Payment Matrix is available at [www.6cpa.com.au](http://www.6cpa.com.au). Payments will be made into the bank account nominated during the registration process via the 6CPA Registration and Claiming Portal.

To receive payments under the RPMA Programme, the Eligible Community Pharmacy must:

- meet the Community Pharmacy Eligibility criteria detailed in clause 3; and
- provide an RPMA Application or Certification Statements as detailed in clause 4, confirming that the Eligibility criteria detailed in clause 3 has been met including:
  - the minimum agreed trading hours with a Registered Pharmacist in attendance were met, and
  - that the pharmacy will continue to meet the minimum agreed trading hours with a Registered Pharmacist in attendance for the next 12 months.

Payment records and remittance advices for each approved payment will be provided via the 6CPA Registration and Claiming Portal.

If an Eligible Community Pharmacy fails to comply with the 6CPA General Terms and Conditions and/or these Programme Specific Guidelines, clause 5 of the 6CPA General Terms and Conditions will apply and the Guild and the Australian Government may at its discretion pursue debt recovery or reduce or withhold any future payments to that Eligible Community Pharmacy.

If the Guild seeks further information, clarification or substantiation, the Eligible Community Pharmacy agrees to respond within the time frame nominated by the Guild.

If the information provided by the Eligible Community Pharmacy does not satisfy the Guild, it is not obliged to make a payment.

## PROGRAMME SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

### 6. EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

If a pharmacy does not meet one or more of the Community Pharmacy Eligibility criteria detailed in clause 3, the pharmacy owner may write to the Guild for an assessment of eligibility under exceptional circumstances. The assessment of the application will be jointly undertaken between the Guild and the Australian Government and will be based on how appropriate the services are for the community.

Pharmacies that are approved under exceptional circumstances will receive a percentage of the "standard" payment for the appropriate PhARIA category, determined by the agreed terms of the exceptional circumstance (for example: reduced opening hours).

An RPMA Application or Annual Renewal rejection due to a change in an Eligible Community Pharmacy's circumstances such as a script volume or PhARIA category, is not considered an exceptional circumstance.

Any request for consideration as an exceptional circumstance must be made in writing to the following address and contain sufficient justification to support the request:

6CPA Support Team  
The Pharmacy Guild of Australia  
PO Box 7036  
Canberra Business Centre ACT 2610

Or via email to: [claim.queries@6cpa.com.au](mailto:claim.queries@6cpa.com.au)

### 7. RESOURCES

RPMA Programme resources are available for download at [www.6cpa.com.au](http://www.6cpa.com.au)

## CONTACT

6CPA Support Team  
The Pharmacy Guild of Australia  
PO Box 310  
Fyshwick ACT 2609  
Phone: 1300 555 262  
Email: [support@6cpa.com.au](mailto:support@6cpa.com.au)