

FAQ FOR ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED HEALTH SERVICES

This program is funded by the Commonwealth Government Department of Health and Ageing as part of the Fourth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

What is QUMAX?

QUMAX stands for 'Quality Use of Medicines Maximised for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples'. The QUMAX Program is the result of an initiative developed collaboratively by the Department of Health and Ageing, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia (the Pharmacy Guild) and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).

What is QUM?

Quality Use of Medicines or QUM means:¹

- selecting management options wisely;
- choosing suitable medicines if a medicine is considered necessary; and
- Using medicines safely and effectively.

The definition of QUM applies equally to decisions about medicine use by individuals and decisions that affect the health of the population.

What does the QUMAX Program aim to achieve?

The QUMAX Program aims to improve the health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who attend participating Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs) in rural and urban areas of Australia. The focus of the Program is improved medication compliance and quality use of medicines (QUM).

When will the QUMAX Program commence?

The QUMAX Program will commence in participating ACCHSs from April 2008.

Is my Service eligible to participate in the Program?

ACCHSs that are funded by the Commonwealth Government (Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health) to provide primary health care services and that employ a GP(s) are eligible to participate in the Program if they meet the following criteria:

- a. the ACCHS is in a RRMA classification (1991 Census Edition) of 1-5 (i.e. a non-remote location)
- b. the ACCHS is **not** currently eligible to participate in the remote Section 100 arrangements for supply of pharmaceutical benefits;
- c. the ACCHS consents for the release of prescriber PBS data from Medicare Australia to the Program Evaluator²; and

¹ NPS definition

http://www.nps.org.au/site.php?page=3&content=/resources/content/qum_awards.html

accessed 24.01/08

- d. The ACCHS agrees to adhere to the Program Business Rules and Guidelines ([click here to view](#)) and the service-level QUM work plan ([click here to view](#)).

What will my Service do under the QUMAX Program?

Your Service will develop a QUM work plan to implement strategies and policies that improve:

- a. quality prescribing and timely dispensing of PBS medicines; and
- b. compliance / concordance with prescribed medicines by clients of your Service through:
 - improving transport arrangements for medicines and prescriptions between your Service and local community pharmacies; and
 - reducing barriers to access to PBS medicines and Dose Administration Aids.

How will the QUM Work plan be developed?

The NACCHO QUMAX Program Manager will provide your Service with a QUM work plan template and the contact details for a QUM Support Pharmacist and the NACCHO State Affiliate. Your Service will be assisted by these support staff to complete your QUM work plan. It is expected that your Service will involve relevant ACCHS staff (including participating doctors, Aboriginal health workers and public health officers) in filling out the template.

The Template is divided into **three sections**:

- a) Policy and protocol development
- b) QUM education and training
- c) Medication Access and Assistance Packages (MAAPs)

[Click here to view the Work plan Template and guidelines](#)

What is Medication Access and Assistance Packages or MAAPs?

MAAPs stand for Medication Access and Assistance Packages which provide support for clients to access PBS medicines.

MAAPs include:

- provision of Dose Administration Aids (DAAs);
- financial assistance for PBS medicines;
- improved recording of PBS safety-net entitlements;
- on-call pharmacy/pharmacist assistance for urgent medication queries and after hours dispensing of medicines; and
- Transport support for the delivery of prescriptions or medicines between the ACCHS and the local pharmacy.

How long will the QUM work plan run for?

² The Program Evaluator must comply with the NACCHO Data Protocols ([click here to view](#))

The QUM work plan will operate for one year. At the end of the first year, the work plan will be revised to run for a second year or until the conclusion of the QUMAX Program (March 2010).

What must my Service do to get started?

Step 1: Registration

Your Service must first register via the NACCHO website (www.naccho.org.au). Registrations are open from March 2008. **Registrations close May 12, 2008**.

Step 2: QUM Work Plan Development

Once the Registration process is complete, the NACCHO QUMAX Program Manager will notify you of your Service's overall annual budget for participation in the Program. You will then complete the QUM Work plan (linked to the completed registration form), using the template provided. Your assigned QUM Support Pharmacist and a State Affiliate contact (or other NACCHO proxy if your relevant SA is unable to participate) will help you complete the template.

The completed QUM Work Plan should then be forwarded to the NACCHO QUMAX Program Manager. All QUM work plans should ideally be received by the end of June 2008.

Step 3: QUM Work Plan Approval

Each submitted QUM Work Plan is assessed by the NACCHO and Pharmacy Guild QUMAX Program Managers and recommendations are forwarded to the QUMAX Program Reference Group (PRG). You will be notified as soon as possible after the PRG has made its decision.

Step 4: Funding Agreement

Once the QUM Work Plan has been approved, your Service will be offered a Funding Agreement by the Pharmacy Guild for participation in the Program. The Funding Agreement will include your Service's annual budget allocation, the approved QUM Work Plan and the conditions of Program participation.

Step 5

Implement the QUM work plan.

Step 6: Monitoring and Annual Review

The QUM Work Plan will be monitored by the NACCHO and Pharmacy Guild QUMAX Program Managers. Much of the program's activity will be automatically monitored by the QUMAX Claims IT system. On a six monthly basis, your Service will be asked to complete a short report on progress on some other aspects of the QUM work plan.

Your Service may also be approached by the Program Evaluator to provide verbal feedback on your participation in the Program.

What will ACCHS doctors do under the Program?

During each consultation the doctor will determine whether a patient requires assistance under the Program's Medication Access and Assistance Packages (MAAPs), in accordance with the Service's policies and the QUMAX Program Business Rules ([click to view](#)).

If the doctor assesses that the patient requires assistance, he or she will make an entry in the on-line QUMAX Claims IT system. This process will be quick and the system will be designed not to interrupt normal workflow.

The doctor will prescribe the medicines and Dose Administration Aids in the normal manner, and stamp the prescription with a QUMAX Program number, that is generated by the QUMAX Claims IT system.

How will the patient receive their medicines?

The patient will take their prescription to a participating community pharmacy and the medicine will be dispensed by the pharmacist as usual. If the patient is eligible to receive assistance under the Program, they will not need to pay for their medicine. In some instances your Service or the pharmacy may provide transport assistance for urgent supply of medicines to needy patients.

Will all patients be eligible for financial assistance for PBS medicines or Dose Administration Aids?

The Program's target group is registered clients of participating ACCHSs who identify themselves as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, or a member of that Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person's family group.

Eligibility for financial assistance under Medication Access and Assistance Packages or MAAPs will be assessed by the ACCHS on an individual basis, in accordance with the Service's policies and the QUMAX Program Business Rules ([click here to view](#)).

If a patient is eligible for financial assistance for PBS medicines at one consultation, is he or she always eligible?

No. The decision is made by the doctor at each consultation.

What is the QUMAX IT claims system?

This system will be an internet-based system that will assist your Service and community pharmacies to participate in the QUMAX Program. It will record information about your Service and assistance provided under the Program to patients of your Service. It will also allow community pharmacists to provide financial assistance to individual patients and make claims to the Pharmacy Guild for payment when assistance is provided. You will receive training and support in how to use the system.

Which ACCHS staff have access to the QUMAX IT claims system?

Your Service must nominate the staff who should have access to the system. The Service will be given a unique login and password to access information in the system.

Who has access to patient data?

Patient identifiable data is ONLY available to staff in your Service. De-identified data is available to the Program Evaluator and the Pharmacy Guild which will make payments to pharmacies and to your Service.

What protections are in place for confidentiality?

The Program Evaluator, NACCHO, the Pharmacy Guild and the IT system administrators must adhere to strict confidentiality requirements and the NACCHO data protocols in managing and evaluating the Program, and in building secure storage for information in the QUMAX Claims IT system.

How will the information I provide at registration be used?

The information provided at registration and in QUM work plans is kept securely but ACCHSs can view their own data 24/7 via the internet at www.naccho.com. The information provided in the registration form:

- is used in the calculation of the MAAPs budget for your service;
- provides information about your service which can be accessed by your designated staff, your designated QUM Pharmacist, your State Affiliate contact (or proxy), and the NACCHO and Pharmacy Guild QUMAX Program Managers so that they can assist in the development of the QUM work plans;
- provides base-line information for the Program Evaluator to assist in the evaluation of the Program;
- provides base-line information by which you can gauge progress under the Program (e.g. increases in accessing PIP, changes in uptake of education); and
- Provides information regarding existing relationships with pharmacies so that they can be encouraged to participate in the Program.

How will the information provided in my QUM work plan be used?

The information recorded in your Service's QUM work plan defines the activities that your Service and your QUM Support Pharmacist will undertake under the Program. It also represents what priority and what budget your Service allocates to the various MAAPs activities. The budget you allocate to MAAPs will also be entered into the QUMAX IT Claims System.

This information will be available to you, your QUM Support Pharmacist, your State Affiliate contact, NACCHO, the Pharmacy Guild and the Program Evaluator to assist in meeting the Program objectives, to monitor progress and to monitor Program expenditure.

Why does the patient need to consent to participate in the Program?

The patient needs to consent to allow the Program Evaluator access to de-identified data about any medicines or Dose Administration Aids provided to them under the Program.

Are all the GPs at my Service automatically entitled to prescribe medicines and Dose Administration Aids under the QUMAX Program?

No. Only the doctors who the ACCHS has identified in the registration form are eligible to participate. These doctors must sign a consent form to allow the Program Evaluator to access information on their prescriber PBS data (linked to Provider number).

If any doctor leaves your Service or withdraws from the Program, or if additional doctors join after you have registered in the Program, you will need to inform the NACCHO QUMAX Program Manager and update this information in the QUMAX IT claims system once the Program has commenced. Any new doctors will then be provided with a system login and password and the capacity to prescribe under the QUMAX Program. They must also sign the applicable consent form.

Can Locum doctors participate in the Program?

Yes. Locum doctors are subject to the same conditions as other doctors on staff.

What will community pharmacies do under the QUMAX Program?

Participating community pharmacies will provide more patient focused and culturally appropriate services for ACCHSs and their clients.

Community pharmacies that participate in the Program will:

- dispense PBS medicines and provide Dose Administration Aids to ACCHS designated clients;
- provide after-hours and urgent supply of medicines;
- assist with streamlined transport arrangements for medicines and prescriptions;
- proactively monitor PBS safety net entitlements for ACCHS clients; and
- assist with enrolments in other programs relating to diabetes, asthma and Home Medicines Reviews.

What will QUM Support Pharmacists do under the QUMAX Program?

QUM Support Pharmacists will work with each ACCHS and local participating pharmacies to:

- develop QUM work plans;
- provide QUM education to ACCHS staff; and
- help develop strategies to maximize:
 - ACCHS access to QUM education, PIP and SIP prescriber incentives;
 - access to Home Medicine Reviews;
 - enrolment in relevant diabetes and asthma programs schemes and registers; and
 - recording of PBS Safety Net entitlements for ACCHS families by participating pharmacies.

How often will I see my QUM Support Pharmacist?

Your QUM Support Pharmacist will dedicate 10 days per year to your Service. At least 2-3 of those days will be spent visiting your Service assisting with QUM work plan development and providing QUM training. The remaining time will be spent assisting with documenting QUM work plan activities and working with local participating community pharmacies. Services may contact their QUM Support Pharmacist at any time during work hours to ask questions about the Program.

How will State Affiliates assist my Service in the QUMAX Program?

The State Affiliate will work with the QUM Support Pharmacist in assisting your Service. In conjunction with NACCHO, they will;

- assist in developing your QUM work plan;
- provide advice in the development of key policies to facilitate the introduction of the QUMAX Program in your Service; and
- review your QUM work plan to ensure QUM opportunities are maximized at a state level (SAs will be provided with online access to the QUMAX IT claims system and each relevant ACCHS registration form and QUM work plan - thereby minimizing administration tasks).

Is the QUMAX Program a trial or is it here to stay?

The QUMAX Program is a two year pilot Program funded under the Fourth Community Pharmacy Agreement. The Program will be evaluated to determine whether it achieves its objectives.

How will my Budget be determined?

Your Service will be provided with a budget allocation as part of its Funding Agreement with the Pharmacy Guild. The budget will include an allocation for Medication Access and Assistance Packages (MAAPs) based on the number of regular registered clients at your Service compared with the total number of clients on the books of each eligible participating ACCHS.

What is the role of NACCHO in the Program?

NACCHO will assist the Pharmacy Guild as a key partner in managing the Program. Activities will include:

- providing coordination, management and support to ACCHSs and State Affiliates;
- developing and providing information on the Program to ACCHSs and State Affiliates;
- developing and hosting the online registration and QUM work plan development processes on its web site;
- providing advice to QUM Support Pharmacists regarding their engagement with ACCHSs and State Affiliates; and
- providing advice to the Pharmacy Guild and Program Evaluators on appropriate protocols relating to the use of ACCHS data.

What is the role of the Pharmacy Guild in the Program?

The Pharmacy Guild is funded by the Commonwealth under the Fourth Community Pharmacy Agreement to develop and manage the Program. It will do this in partnership with NACCHO.

Who should I contact if I need further information?

You can contact the NACCHO QUMAX Program Manager, Vicki Sheedy at vsheedy1@bigpond.com or the Pharmacy Guild QUMAX Program Manager Anne Develin anne.develin@guild.org.au

You will also be provided with the contact details of your QUM Support Pharmacist and State Affiliate contact, once you have registered in the Program.

