

## Canberra Script plans for ACT

### **What is Canberra Script?**

Canberra Script is a new online, real time prescription monitoring system being implemented in the ACT to assist prescribers (including medical practitioners and nurse practitioners) and pharmacists when they prescribe or dispense monitored medicines for consumers. It is designed to reduce pharmaceutical harm in our community.

Canberra Script will replace the existing DAPIS Online Remote Access (DORA) real time prescription monitoring system which was implemented in 2019. The new system, named Canberra Script forms part of the new national Real Time Prescription Monitoring (RTPM) system being implemented across Australia. Each Australian jurisdiction will implement their own local version of the national RTPM system with core features and functionality to enable national consistency.

### **What is the purpose of Canberra Script?**

The purpose of Canberra Script is to support health practitioners reduce harms and preventable deaths in the ACT community due to abuse and misuse of monitored medicines. ACT Health's vision for Canberra Script is that prescribers and pharmacists use this system to provide safer care for ACT consumers.

### **Why do we need a new real time prescription monitoring system?**

Australia has a growing national problem with the misuse and abuse of pharmaceuticals. The number of harms including deaths from prescription medicines has increased and is now higher than illegal drugs.

Canberra Script will provide enhanced features and functionality for health practitioners and an improved user experience over DORA. Canberra Script will include real time alerts and notifications through compatible medical and pharmacy software where patients may be exhibiting signs of drug-seeking behaviour such as 'doctor shopping'. Prescribers will also be able to apply for Chief Health Officer approval to prescribe controlled medicines via Canberra Script, to assist streamline access to treatment for their patients.

The system has been designed with a simple self- service registration portal to make it easier for practitioners to gain access to the system.



Canberra Script is not intended to disadvantage consumers where there is a legitimate clinical need for a medicine and where a prescriber is authorised to prescribe a medicine for them.

## **What information will be included in Canberra Script?**

Canberra Script will include information about controlled (schedule 8) medicines and some prescription only (schedule 4) medicines that are associated with abuse or misuse (eg. Benzodiazepines). Canberra Script will include prescribing and dispensing information for at least all monitored medicines dispensed in the ACT as well as any other state or territory for ACT residents.

## **Will Canberra Script be mandatory to use?**

The use of Canberra Script by practitioners will be voluntary at this stage. ACT Health strives to have all health practitioners who prescribe or dispense monitored medicines using Canberra Script as part of their clinical practice to provide safer care for their patients. The ACT Government will evaluate whether to mandate practitioner use of Canberra Script after it is implemented.

## **When will the new Canberra Script be operational?**

ACT Health Directorate is working with the Australian Government and other partners to make the system available for early adopter pilot sites in 2021, before its roll out to all providers in early 2022.

## **How do practitioners and the community find out more?**

ACT Health will be developing a suite of health practitioner training packages and consumer information to support Canberra Script rollout.

Further information about Canberra Script including release date and training packages will be provided in 2021.

For more information about the ACT Government's introduction of national RTPM, please visit [www.health.act.gov.au/canberrascript](http://www.health.act.gov.au/canberrascript) or contact the Health Protection Service 02 5124 9208.



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