

From 1 July 2015, the way PBS subsidised In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) medicines are prescribed, dispensed and accessed will align with other PBS subsidised medicines. The new arrangements will be more flexible for patients, with a stronger role for community pharmacies.

The new arrangements will contribute to PBS sustainability. Like other PBS subsidised medicines, patients will contribute a PBS patient co-payment. The PBS patient co-payment will count towards a family’s PBS Safety Net.

Patient and prescriber eligibility criteria will remain unchanged.

From 1 July 2016, it will be mandatory to include the Reproductive Technology Advisory Committee (RTAC) accreditation number within the PBS online claim for section 100 IVF medicines.

## PATIENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is changing for patients?

From 1 July 2015, patients will have greater choice about where they access IVF medicines, through either a community pharmacy, private or public hospital pharmacy or an approved medical practitioner (‘dispensing doctor’).

To better align with other PBS medicines, patients will pay a co-payment for each dispensing of IVF medicine on a prescription from their medical practitioner. Co-payments for 2016 are $6.20 for concessional patients, and up to $38.30 for non-concessional patients.

The introduction of the collection of the RTAC accreditation number from 1 July 2016 will see no further change for patients in accessing IVF medicines.

### Will patients have to pay the patient co-payment for an IVF medicine ordered prior to 1 July 2015, or for stock on hand supplied direct to the patient by the IVF Clinic?

No. Co-payments apply only to supplies of IVF medicines made from a valid PBS Authority [STREAMLINED] prescription dated 1 July 2015 or later.

### What’s not changing for patients?

Under the new arrangements, patient eligibility requirements will remain the same. Patients will continue to visit their specialist medical practitioner for assessment. From 1 July 2015, they will be provided with prescriptions to obtain IVF medicines to use during their treatment.

## PRESCRIBER & CLINIC FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is changing for prescribers?

*From 1 July 2015*

While prescriber eligibility requirements will remain unchanged, from 1 July 2015 specialist medical practitioners will prescribe IVF medicines for eligible patients in the same way as other PBS-subsidised medicines. IVF specialist prescribers should still be employed or affiliated with an IVF clinic that is accredited by the Fertility Society of Australia’s Reproductive Technology Advisory Committee (RTAC) to provide assisted reproductive technology services.

Prior to 1 July 2016, prescribers write PBS Authority [STREAMLINED] prescriptions for their patients, who will obtain the medicines from the pharmacy of their choice. Prescribers should include the RTAC accreditation number for the practice/clinic on each prescription form they write for IVF medicines. This can be accommodated by including the RTAC number in the prescriber’s address block if using pre-printed PBS stationery.

*From 1 July 2016*

Prescriber eligibility requirements will remain unchanged.

The collection of the RTAC accreditation number by pharmacy dispensing software from 1 July 2016 supports existing policy for the RTAC accreditation number to be included on each prescription written for IVF medicines. Prescribers may be contacted by pharmacies to confirm the RTAC accreditation number.

### Where do I obtain the Streamlined Authority codes to use on prescriptions that meet the PBS requirements?

These codes were supplied to vendors of prescribing and dispensing software prior to 1 July 2015 for incorporation in their software updates.

### What if my patient needs less of a particular IVF medicine than is allowed under the PBS for treatment?

The quantities given in the PBS Schedule are maximum quantities permitted to be prescribed under usual clinical circumstances. You should only prescribe the quantity required by your patient – please do not use the default maximum quantity of an IVF medicine if it is not required.

### What if my patient requires more than the PBS Maximum Quantity for a particular item?

If a patient requires a quantity of an item beyond the PBS listed Maximum Quantity, prescribers may request prior approval to prescribe the additional quantity from the Department of Human Services – Medicare or the Department of Veterans’ Affairs.

### Can I request an increase to the number of repeats allowed for IVF listed items?

No. Repeats are not permissible for section 100 IVF listed medicines. A patient should only be provided a quantity of an IVF medicine suitable for a single course of treatment.

### Can prescriptions be written for brand-specific IVF medicines?

Yes. Under the PBS a prescriber may specify the brand of medicine to be supplied by a pharmacist by endorsing the prescription that brand substitution is not permitted. A checkbox on PBS pre‑printed stationery is available for this purpose.

### Claims for items ordered prior to 1 July 2015

Payments to pharmaceutical companies for medicines supplied to clinics prior to 1 July 2015 will be processed by the Department of Human Services – Medicare up to 31 December 2015.

## PHARMACIST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is changing for pharmacists?

*From 1 July 2015*

From 1 July 2015, pharmacies will start to see IVF medicines PBS Authority prescriptions being presented for dispensing. These forms can originate from private specialists, private hospital clinics, or public hospital clinics. All PBS-approved pharmacies and dispensing doctors may dispense these prescriptions, whether they originate from a hospital clinic or a private specialist.

Hospital authorities and community pharmacists will be remunerated for dispensing IVF medicines at the rate applying on the date of supply, for valid PBS prescriptions dated 1 July 2015 or later. The dispensed price is calculated using the approved ex‑manufacturer price plus the applicable mark‑up and dispensing fee. PBS co-payments must be charged for dispensing prescriptions dated 1 July 2015 or later. Usual co-payment amounts will apply. Dispensing software will be updated to feature these changes.

*From 1 July 2016*

From 1 July 2016, pharmacists must include the RTAC accreditation number in their PBS online claims when claiming for a section 100 listed IVF item.

The collection of the RTAC accreditation number from 1 July 2016 supports existing policy for the RTAC accreditation number to be included on each prescription written for IVF medicines.

The amended arrangements introduced from 1 July 2015 will otherwise remain unchanged.

### What is the RTAC accreditation number and where will I find it?

The Reproductive Technology Advisory Committee (RTAC) of the Fertility Society of Australia accredits IVF clinics to provide assisted reproductive services. As part of this accreditation they are issued with an RTAC accreditation number. Further information on the RTAC accreditation can be found on the [Fertility Society of Australia's website](http://www.fertilitysociety.com.au/rtac/).

Prescribers are encouraged to record the RTAC accreditation number on the prescription for section 100 IVF listed medicines. If the number is not included on the prescription, pharmacists should liaise with the prescriber or the patient’s IVF clinic to obtain the number.

### What do I need to do for PBS online claiming?

Where a section 100 IVF prescription is dispensed with a Date of Supply prior to 1 July 2016, the RTAC accreditation number does not need to be supplied via PBS online.

Where a section 100 IVF prescription is dispensed with a Date of Supply on or after 1 July 2016, the RTAC accreditation number located on the prescription must be included in the PBS online claim, regardless of the date of prescribing.

Pharmacy dispensing software will be updated to include a new field for the RTAC accreditation number from 1 July 2016. New [PBS online reason codes](https://www.humanservices.gov.au/health-professionals/enablers/pbs-reason-codes-online-claiming-pbs-pharmacies) specific to the RTAC accreditation number will be effective from 1 July 2016.

Without the RTAC accreditation number, claims for section 100 IVF medicines will not be processed.

### How will IVF medicines be supplied to pharmacies?

IVF medicines will be available from pharmaceutical wholesalers.