

PBS Authorities – Changes from 1 November 2023

We understand having access to PBS-subsidised medicines can be critical to patient care. That's why Services Australia and the Department of Health and Aged Care are continuing to work together to increase the number of PBS medicines that can be requested and approved in 'real-time' using the Online PBS Authorities system (the system). This will include the changes being made to the medicines for severe active rheumatoid arthritis and pediatric chronic plaque psoriasis from 1 November 2023.

These changes will make it easier for you to request authority approval for these medicines from Services Australia. You will no longer need to submit written authority applications, prescriptions and test results for certain medicines and treatment phases. Instead, you will be able to use the system to apply for authority approval and provide evidence digitally.

Did you know some of the continuing treatments are now Authority Required (Streamlined). This means you no longer need to request prior authority approval from Services Australia to prescribe the medication. Instead, you must annotate the prescription by providing the four or five digit streamlined authority code for the medicine being prescribed. This can be found next to the appropriate indication in the PBS Schedule.

It is important to note with this change, Services Australia is no longer required to assess the eligibility for these streamlined PBS-subsidised medicines for continuing treatment. Applications that are Authority Required (Streamlined) received by Services Australia will be returned to the prescriber without assessment.

Summary of changes from 1 November 2023

	request Authority Online		request Authority by Telephone		upload form via HPOS or post
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Medicines	1 November 2023 Authority Level	1 November 2023 Changes
Severe active rheumatoid arthritis		
Biosimilar brands of: - Adalimumab - Etanercept - Infliximab intravenous	Telephone / Online: Initial 1, 2, 3, change in therapy & re-commencement treatments 	Change to the initial 1, 2, 3, change in therapy & re-commencement Authority Required restrictions. You will no longer be required to submit a written authority application. Authority applications for initial 1, 2, 3, change in therapy & re-commencement treatments can be made in real time using the Online PBS Authorities system or by telephone.
	Streamlined: First continuing and subsequent continuing treatments	Change to the first continuing and subsequent continuing Authority Required restrictions. You will no longer be required to submit a written authority application. Prescriptions for first and subsequent continuing treatments will be Authority Required (STREAMLINED).
Innovator brands of: - Abatacept - Adalimumab - Baricitinib - Certolizumab - Etanercept - Golimumab - Infliximab intravenous	Written: First continuing treatment 	A new first continuing treatment phase has been created for biological medicines that do not have biosimilar brands. Authority applications for first continuing treatment for all innovator brands must be made in writing.
	Streamlined: Subsequent continuing treatment	Change to the subsequent continuing treatment Authority Required restriction.

Medicines	1 November 2023 Authority Level	1 November 2023 Changes
- Tocilizumab - Tofacitinib		You will no longer be required to submit a written authority application. Prescriptions for subsequent continuing treatment will be Authority Required (STREAMLINED). Prescriptions for patients who have previously received treatment under the old 'continuing' restriction can be made using the corresponding Authority Required (STREAMLINED) 'subsequent continuing' restriction.
Upadacitinib	Written: Initial 1, 2, 3 / Continuing treatment 	No change to the initial 1, 2, 3 and continuing Authority Required restrictions. Authority applications must be made in writing.
	Telephone / Online: Balance of Supply 	No change to the initial 1, 2, 3 balance of supply and continuing balance of supply Authority Required restrictions. Authority applications can be made in real time using the Online PBS Authorities system or by telephone.
Infliximab subcutaneous	Written: Initial / Continuing treatment 	No change to the initial and continuing Authority Required restrictions. Authority applications must be made in writing.
	Telephone / Online: Balance of Supply 	No change to the balance of supply Authority Required restrictions. Authority applications can be made in real time using the Online PBS Authorities system or by telephone.
Paediatric chronic plaque psoriasis		
Etanercept	Telephone / Online: Initial 1, 2, 3 treatments 	Change to the initial 1, 2, 3 Authority Required restrictions. You will no longer be required to submit a written authority application. Authority applications for initial 1, 2, 3 treatment can be made in real time using the Online PBS Authorities system or by telephone.
	Streamlined: Completion of course treatment	Change to the completion of course Authority Required restrictions. You will no longer be required to submit a written authority application. Prescriptions for completion of course treatment will be Authority Required (STREAMLINED).
Ustekinumab	Written: Initial and continuing treatments 	No change to the initial and continuing Authority Required restrictions. Authority applications must be made in writing.

Additional information

Where to find the changes

You can find out if a PBS medicine can be submitted digitally by checking the Administrative advice for that condition.

You can find the Administrative advice for each item under the Note in the PBS Schedule on www.pbs.gov.au.

Example Administrative advice:

Note

Any queries concerning the arrangements to prescribe may be directed to Services Australia on 1800 700 270 (hours of operation 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday).

Prescribing information (including Authority Application forms and other relevant documentation as applicable) is available on the Services Australia website at www.servicesaustralia.gov.au

Applications for authorisation under this restriction should be made in real time using the Online PBS Authorities system (see www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/hpos)

Alternatively, applications for authority to prescribe can be submitted online using the form upload facility in Health Professional Online Services (HPOS) at www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/hpos

Or mailed to:

Services Australia
Complex Drugs
Reply Paid 9826
HOBART TAS 7001

Can PBS authority applications be submitted by post or HPOS upload?

You can still submit applications for authority to prescribe by:

- posting your application
- uploading documents in HPOS.

Updated versions of application forms will remain available on our website. You'll still need to submit authority applications, prescriptions and test result details. This will delay the assessment of the authority application.

For more information about the **Online PBS Authorities system** visit www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/hppbsauthorities

Services Australia has a broad range of educational resources on the **Health Professional Education Resources** website. This includes simulations, podcast and an infographic on the Online PBS Authorities system. Visit <https://hpe.servicesaustralia.gov.au/pharmaceutical-benefits-scheme.html>

If you require additional assistance or have any queries, please email authority.comms.change@servicesaustralia.gov.au.

Important information

This information relates to the administration of these listings by Services Australia. For further information on broader PBS changes and Authority Required (STREAMLINED) codes, please visit www.pbs.gov.au