

## Position statement

### Complete and current medication lists

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia's (SHPA) position is that complete and current medication lists are central to the safe and optimal use of medicines for individual patients. Medication lists assemble the medicines prescribed by multiple prescribers (including self-prescribed medicines); they facilitate the appropriate evaluation of a patient's medicine treatment.

SHPA's position is that medication lists should be maintained, updated and validated by health professionals, particularly pharmacists, whenever a patient's medicines are changed, as part of any medication review and particularly when the patient transitions between episodes of care.

SHPA's position is that, with the patient's consent, a complete and current medication list should be included when a patient's care is transitioned between health professionals, between health service organisations and within health service organisations.

SHPA stresses that it is essential that electronic medication lists are able to be updated or curated. Such curation should be undertaken by a healthcare professional (e.g. doctor, pharmacist, nurse) and be available regardless of the setting.

SHPA's position is that patient's should be involved with the compilation of their medication list, be provided with the updated medication list and encouraged to share their medication list with all of their health professionals and have this included in their electronic health record.

### Background

Medication lists provide a 'snapshot' of the patient's current medicines, they require continual curation and review. Medication lists are usually curated from multiple sources and a patient interview, using a structured interview technique.

SHPA's position is that the prescribing of medicines is best undertaken via a collaborative model, underpinned by timely and effective communication between the health care team and the patient. This includes a 'virtuous circle' approach where a readily accessible complete and current medication list is always available to support the evaluation and establish the basis for changes to a patient's medicine treatment.

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care position is that an up-to-date and accurate medication list is essential for ensuring safe prescribing and continuity of medication management and that such a complete medication history should be accessible when decisions are made to prescribe medicines.<sup>1</sup> The Commission states that there should always be a comprehensive list of the patient's ongoing medicines, current at the point of discharge, whether or not all medicines are supplied by the hospital. The percentage of patients whose discharge summaries contain a current, accurate and comprehensive list of medicines is one of the Commission's National Quality Use of Medicines Indicators for Australian Hospitals.<sup>2</sup>

The Commission uses the following description for either hard copy or electronic medication lists:

'Medication list refers to a list of the medicines provided to the patient or carer, which includes the following information:

- all medicines to be taken by the patient, including the dose, frequency and indication for each medicine. All prescription, over-the-counter, and complementary medicines should be included, as well as all regular, intermittent and "as required" medicines. The list should include medicines to be taken by all routes i.e. oral, topical, parenteral etc.
- information about changes to therapy, including dose changes, new medicines and ceased medicines
- any medicines NOT to be taken by the patient, including those causing allergies/adverse drug reactions.'

### Approved by SHPA Federal Council – August 2015

#### References

1. [http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Standard4\\_Oct\\_2012\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Standard4_Oct_2012_WEB.pdf)
2. [http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/SAQ127\\_National\\_QUM\\_Indicators\\_V14\\_indicator5.81.pdf](http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/SAQ127_National_QUM_Indicators_V14_indicator5.81.pdf)

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