

Electronic Prescribing (ePrescribing) and Active Script List (ASL)

Electronic prescribing allows for the prescribing and dispensing of medicines without the need for a paper prescription, which can improve efficiency and medicines safety.

Electronic prescribing is an initiative as part of the National Health Plan. It was originally due to be rolled out next year, but its delivery has been progressed to support telehealth consultations and to help protect healthcare providers and patients from infectious disease, in this case COVID-19, by removing the need to present to your GP in person to get a prescription.

Instead of a paper prescription, the patient can choose to receive their prescription via an app, SMS, or email in the form of a link to a unique QR code or 'token'.

The token is scanned by the pharmacy to unlock the electronic form of the prescription from an encrypted and secure electronic prescription delivery service. If the patient has a repeat for a prescription, they will receive a new token from the pharmacy that replaces the original token.

Electronic prescriptions will not be mandatory. Patients will have a choice to receive either an electronic or a paper prescription from their prescriber (but not both).

Active Script List (ASL) is an alternative way to manage ePrescriptions that can help people who are taking multiple medicines. ASL is a list of all available prescriptions, including repeats. Patients do not need to keep track of tokens because the pharmacy can access these prescriptions (with a patient's permission) through the patient's ASL.

How does the ASL work?

- The patient visits their preferred pharmacy and requests to be registered for an ASL.
- Patient visits the Doctor. If the patient chooses an electronic prescription, it will be visible in their ASL by default.
- Patient visits the Pharmacy. The Pharmacy will verify the patient's identity and request consent to access their ASL via SMS or email. The Pharmacy doesn't have to be the original pharmacy where the patient had registered for their ASL.
- The Pharmacy selects the relevant prescription from the patient's ASL. The number of repeats remaining will be updated in the patient's ASL.
- The patients can choose to not to keep some prescriptions in their ASL.
- A carer can operate the ASL on the patient's behalf.
- Until a child turns 15 years old, a parent or guardian can register and operate an ASL on behalf of their child.



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- Doctors and pharmacies that have been given explicit consent by the patient will be able to view ASL and then access the selected script token for dispensing.

The ASL is currently rolling out to pharmacies with compatible software across Australia and will become available more broadly throughout 2022. ([RACGP - Electronic prescribing](#)).

For more information visit [Electronic prescriptions | Australian Digital Health Agency](#).