



SHPA submission to Application for authorisation AA1000641 by FRED IT Group – interested party consultation

The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA) is the national, professional organisation for the 6,100+ Hospital Pharmacists, and their Hospital Pharmacist Intern and Hospital Pharmacy Technician colleagues working across Australia's health system, advocating for their pivotal role improving the safety and quality of medicines use. Embedded in multidisciplinary medical teams and equipped with exceptional medicines management expertise, SHPA members are progressive advocates for clinical excellence, committed to evidence-based practice and passionate about patient care.

SHPA convenes an Electronic Medication Management Speciality Practice Group, comprising a network of SHPA members who work to optimise patient care and outcomes when deploying, building or analysing data or using digital systems such as electronic medication records, e-prescribing, dispensing software, automated dispensing systems, smart pumps and pharmacy robots.

SHPA welcomes the advancements in electronic prescribing across Australia, especially across hospital services, however it remains concerned a lack of competition will reduce accountability for IT vendors in providing the necessary adjustments in prescription delivery services critical to providing person-centred care.

The Medical Software Industry Association (MSIA) and its Code of Practice stipulates 'competition is good for the industry and innovation'.¹ SHPA is concerned the lack of competitive pressure and risk will result in an inadequate incentive for an IT vendor to provide the required service levels and any subsequent adjustments to software to healthcare services. This lack of accountability could compromise patient safety initiatives and stifle innovation in this rapidly growing area.

Despite reservations regarding a sole provider for electronic prescriptions in Australia, SHPA provides in-principle support to the application for authorisation AA1000641 by FRED IT Group, seeking to make arrangements with MediSecure, to facilitate a transition from multiple parties providing services around publicly funded electronic prescriptions. SHPA supports any process that facilitates a smooth transition for customers, healthcare professionals and patients.

SHPA trusts that the Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) and FRED IT Group will have rigorous processes in place to ensure the electronic prescribing architecture, performance and responsiveness with respect to development activities, all support the implementation and maintenance of electronic prescribing across hospitals in Australia. SHPA and its Electronic Medication Management Leadership Committee are well placed to support ADHA and FRED IT Group in navigating the complexities of hospital pharmacy sector requirements around electronic prescribing as it is implemented across Australian hospitals.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss our submission further, please do not hesitate to contact Jerry Yik, Head of Policy and Advocacy on jjik@shpa.org.au.

References

¹ The Medical Software Industry Association (MSIA). Code of Practice. Available at: <https://www.msia.com.au/join/msia-code-of-practice/>

