

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**  
***NATIONAL HEALTH ACT 1953***  
***NATIONAL HEALTH (REMOTE ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICES PROGRAM)***  
***SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS AMENDMENT INSTRUMENT 2015 (NO. 1)***  
**PB 65 of 2015**

**Authority**

Subsection 100(1) of the *National Health Act 1953* (the Act) enables the Minister to make special arrangements for the supply of pharmaceutical benefits. Subsection 100(2) of the Act provides that the Minister may vary or revoke a special arrangement made under subsection 100(1).

Subsection 100(3) of the Act provides that Part VII of the Act, and instruments made for the purposes of Part VII of the Act, have effect subject to a special arrangement made under subsection 100(1).

**Purpose**

The purpose of the National Health (Remote Aboriginal Health Services Program) Special Arrangements Amendment Instrument 2015 (No. 1), (the Amendment Instrument), made under subsections 100(1) and 100(2) of the Act, is to amend the *National Health (Remote Aboriginal Health Services Program) Special Arrangements Instrument 2010* (PB 65 of 2010) (the Special Arrangement). The Special Arrangement provides for the supply to remote Aboriginal Health Services of pharmaceutical benefits.

The Amendment Instrument increases the handling fee that is payable to an approved pharmacist or an approved hospital authority in respect of the supply of a pharmaceutical benefit to an approved Aboriginal Health Service in accordance with the Special Arrangement.

On and from 1 July 2015, the handling fee is increasing from \$2.88 to \$2.92. The handling fee is indexed annually in accordance with the (WCI9).

**Consultations**

The Amendment Instrument is minor and machinery in nature.

The Amendment Instrument commences on 1 July 2015.

The Amendment Instrument is a legislative instrument for the purpose of the *Legislative Instruments Act 2003*.

## **Statement of Compatibility with Human Rights**

*Prepared in accordance with Part 3 of the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011*

### ***NATIONAL HEALTH (REMOTE ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICES PROGRAM) SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS AMENDMENT INSTRUMENT 2015 (NO.1)***

This Legislative Instrument is compatible with the human rights and freedoms recognised or declared in the international instruments listed in section 3 of the *Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011*.

#### **Overview of the Legislative Instrument**

The purpose of the National Health (Remote Aboriginal Health Services Program) Special Arrangements Amendment Instrument 2015 (No. 1), (the Amendment Instrument), made under subsections 100(1) and 100(2) of the Act, is to amend the *National Health (Remote Aboriginal Health Services Program) Special Arrangement Instrument 2010* (PB 65 of 2010) (the Special Arrangement), to make changes to the Special Arrangement to increase the handling fee that is payable to an approved pharmacist or an approved hospital authority in respect of the supply of a pharmaceutical benefit to an approved Aboriginal Health Service in accordance with the Special Arrangement.

On and from 1 July 2015, the handling fee is increasing from \$2.88 to \$2.92. The handling fee is indexed annually in accordance with the (WCI9).

#### **Human rights implications**

The Amendment Instrument engages Article 2 and 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) by assisting with the progressive realisation by all appropriate means of the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) is a benefit scheme which assists with advancement of this human right by providing for subsidised access by patients to medicines. The Special Arrangement ensures more ready and equitable access to PBS medicines for Indigenous Australians through the Section 100 Supply of PBS Medicines to Remote Area Aboriginal Health Services (RAAHS) Program. The RAAHS Program addresses three identified barriers that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in remote communities experience in accessing essential medicines, being geographical, cultural and financial.

#### **Conclusion**

This Amendment Instrument is compatible with human rights because it advances the protection of human rights.

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