

What changes are occurring and why?

The TPA is an independent statutory authority established under the *Pharmacy Control Act 2001*. The primary functions of the TPA are to administer a scheme of pharmacy business premises registration and ownership approval, and to ensure the services that are provided from those premises are of the highest possible professional standard.

The *Pharmacy Control (Fees) Regulations 2021* prescribe fees that may be charged by the Authority in performing its functions. The regulations have not been comprehensively reviewed or substantially increased since their introduction in 2011. As a result, the TPA has experienced sustainability challenges for several years related to insufficient fee revenue and resourcing of day-to-day administrative and regulatory activities.

Exceptional grant funding received from the DoH over the last two years has supported maintaining the TPA's inspection program, ensuring that all pharmacies in Tasmania have been inspected within the expected three-year cycle. However, this is not a sustainable approach to support ongoing Authority operations.

The DoH will support the ongoing sustainability of the TPA and provide efficiencies through:

- amalgamation of some compliance activities pertaining to the *Pharmacy Control Act 2001* and the *Poisons Act 1971*
- reduced utilisation of external contractors
- reduced single-person dependence and resultant risks to operational continuity
- access to broader expertise within the DoH to support upkeep of the legislation and associated fees framework
- consolidation of compliance records into a single resource.

How will pharmacies benefit?

Pharmacy owners and staff will benefit from having a single point of day-to-day contact for their regulatory obligations under both the *Pharmacy Control Act 2001* and *Poisons Act 1971*, and a reduction in the duplication of compliance audits when inspections are amalgamated.

Beyond this, pharmacies are expected to see little change regarding the TPA's activities.

What functions of the TPA will the DoH be supporting?

The DoH will support ongoing TPA functions, including administrative, regulatory, legal, ICT and finance.

The TPA will remain an independent statutory authority and continue to govern pharmacy premises regulation. The TPA will retain responsibility for the regulation of pharmacy business ownership.

What is the timeframe for these changes to occur?

The TPA has been working towards the transition with the DoH since 1 November 2024, and it is anticipated to be completed by the next annual renewal cycle.

What does this mean for fees payable by pharmacy owners?

Increases to fees proposed in 2023 and supported by stakeholders did not proceed through the parliamentary process. This has exacerbated the financial sustainability challenges for the TPA. Whilst efficiencies have been identified in the new administrative approach, the ongoing financial viability of the TPA is heavily reliant on the introduction of changes to the fee structure. These changes will likely include significant fee increases and are anticipated to commence from 1 July 2025.

Who to speak to for more information?

Contact details for the TPA remain unchanged as follows: Registrar phone: 0417752346

Registrar email: registrar@pharmacyauthority.tas.gov.au

Any future changes to these contact details will be circulated as they occur.