

Statement from our Managing Director

I am delighted to share some important news about landmark changes to access medical abortion care in Australia.

Over the past year, MS Health has worked closely with health regulatory bodies to make the prescribing and dispensing of MS-2 Step easier and make medical abortion more accessible for women and pregnant people across Australia.

This work culminated in recent announcements from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). The changes represent the most significant advancements since the introduction of medical abortion in Australia over a decade ago.

The key changes are as follows:

1. **Prescriber registration and certification removal:** The need for prescriber registration, mandatory training and certification has been removed.

MS Health will continue to provide free and easy access to our online training program and other supports for individual prescribers. We will also partner with professional and health organisations to ensure training and support for MS-2 Step prescribing and medical abortion is accessible.

We are in the process of updating the MS-2 Step Medical Education Program to align with the announced changes.

1. **Pharmacist registration requirement removal:** The requirement for pharmacists to be registered to dispense MS-2 Step has been removed.

This decision removes a significant barrier to access. MS Health will continue to make our education resources accessible online for pharmacists and we will partner with pharmacist organisations to disseminate information.

1. **Expanded range of prescribers:** The TGA decision means that health practitioners other than medical practitioners will be able to prescribe MS-2 Step (subject to other legal and regulatory requirements) and the PBS decision means MS-2 Step will be subsidised through the PBS for prescribing by Nurse Practitioners (from 1 August 2023) and Authorised Midwives (effective date yet to be advised) in addition to medical practitioners.

States and Territories will play a critical role in regulating the broader prescribing of MS-2 Step.

Existing abortion legislation in various States and Territories restricts those health professionals who can provide abortion care and this needs to be carefully considered. MSI Australia will continue to advocate for further abortion law reform across Australia and we support current intentions of various State Governments including WA and Qld to drive further reform.

1. **PBS streamlined authority:** In conjunction with the TGA changes, MS-2 Step has been moved to Streamlined Authority. This means prescribers will no longer be required to phone or login to Proda to receive prior approval. This will also begin on 1 August.

We acknowledge and thank all those in the TGA and PBAC/PBS processes who have considered the need for better access to abortion care and contributed to these landmark changes.

We also acknowledge and thank the many staff, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, midwives, advocates and partners who have worked with us to achieve these changes – they reflect the dedication and collective efforts of many.

Greg Johnson

**Managing Director
MS Health**

The logo for MSHealth, featuring the letters 'MS' in a large, stylized, light blue font, followed by the word 'Health' in a smaller, cursive, light blue font.