DHS is asking practitioners to be mindful of a potential increase in requests for medicines at this time of year and the consequences of getting more medicine than is needed.

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Safety Net

The PBS Safety Net reduces the cost of prescription medicines for individuals and families once they reach the Safety Net threshold. Once the Safety Net threshold has been reached, medicines covered under the PBS are cheaper or free, for the rest of the calendar year.

To take advantage of the availability of cheaper medicine under the PBS Safety Net, some patients unintentionally get more PBS subsidised medicine than they need and stockpile it just in case they run out.

Stockpiling excess medicines is a financial burden on the Australian Government and results in increased costs for everyone covered under the PBS Safety Net. It also poses a health risk to the individual and/or their family.

Some useful information for patients

- Help keep the PBS affordable for everyone by not getting more medicines than you need.
- Make sure you don’t fill your PBS prescriptions earlier than you need them—it’s misusing the PBS and increases the cost for everyone.
- If you get an early repeat for some PBS medicines, it won’t count towards your PBS Safety Net threshold. An early repeat is when you get the same medicine within 20 days of the previous supply.
- If you get an early repeat and you’ve already reached the PBS Safety Net threshold, you’ll be charged your normal PBS patient contribution instead of the reduced Safety Net amount.

For more information on the PBS Safety Net, go to humanservices.gov.au/pbssafetynet