

FACT SHEET

Health Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2022

The Health Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill makes a number of minor amendments to the *Acts Interpretation Act 1931*, the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act 1995*, the *Ambulance Service Act 1982*, the *Asbestos-Related Diseases (Occupational Exposure) Compensation Act 2011*, the *End-of-Life Choices (Voluntary Assisted Dying) Act 2021*, the *Health Act 1997*, the *Poisons Act 1971*, the *Public Health Act 1997*, the *Public Trustee Act 1930* and the *Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*, and other health-related legislation.

The amendments are technical in nature and are intended to improve the operation of legislation for which the Minister for Health has portfolio responsibility.

Specifically, the Health Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill makes the following amendments:

- amendments to the *Acts Interpretation Act 1931* to insert new definitions for the term “paramedic” and the term “pharmacist”;
- amendments to the *Ambulance Service Act* and the *End-of-Life Choices (Voluntary Assisted Dying) Act 2021* to remove the definition of “paramedic”, and to rescind the *Ambulance Service (Paramedic) Regulations 2014*, given the proposed inclusion of a definition for this term in the *Acts Interpretation Act*;
- amendments to the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act 1995*, *Asbestos-Related Diseases (Occupational Exposure) Compensation Act 2011*, *Public Trustee Act 1930* and *Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* to remove the definition of “pharmacist” contained in these Acts, given the proposed inclusion of a definition for the term in the *Acts Interpretation Act*;
- amendments to the *Health Act* and *Health (Fees) Regulations 2017* to relocate the definition of “hospital services”, and associated definitions, from the *Health (Fees) Regulations* to the *Health Act*, and to correct other out of date references;
- amendments to the *Poisons Act* and *Poisons Regulations 2018* to:
 - enable certain prescribers and dispensers to be exempted from the requirement to take steps to check the monitored medicines database before prescribing or dispensing a monitored medicine in certain circumstances;
 - outline the circumstances in which it should not be an offence for certain health practitioners to make a narcotic substance or specified substance available to a person who is reasonably believed to be a drug dependent person, to be exhibiting drug seeking behaviour, or to have a history of obtaining a substance for a non-medical purpose or of unlawful possession or supply;
 - enable the Secretary to authorise a medical practitioner, dentist, authorised health professional or authorised nurse practitioner to make available more

than one narcotic substance or specified substance through a single authority, and to authorise an amount that is up to a maximum amount of a narcotic substance or specified substance through an authority; and

- replace the current definitions of “pharmaceutical chemist” and “pharmacy trainee” with more contemporary definitions, and to correct other out of date references and terminology; and
- amendments to the *Public Health Act 1997* to:
 - streamline provisions for the appointment of environmental health officers and medical officers of health and to provide certainty in relation to the status of past appointments; and
 - clarify the enforceable nature of a requirement, imposed by the Director of Public Health, for a person, public authority or Agency to remove or destroy an article, item, goods or substances that, in the Director’s opinion, may cause a threat to public health.