

## FACT SHEET

### *Poisons (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2017*

- This Bill will make amendments to the *Poisons Act 1971* that improve administrative arrangements for health workforce access to scheduled substances, while also retaining adequate controls to ensure the safety of the public.
- The scope of practice of allied health professions in Australia is increasingly evolving to include scheduled substances as part of treatment regimes in order to meet the needs of patients and clients. The Bill therefore extends the Regulation-making powers to include prescribing, sale and supply of scheduled substances by authorised health professionals, provided that they are acting within their professional scope of practice. Podiatric surgeons and podiatrists with an endorsement for scheduled medicines are the immediate priority for professions to be included as authorised health professionals in the regulations and thereby granted prescribing rights in Tasmania.
- The Bill also provides for the Minister for Health to make short-term interim orders that enable early access by authorised health professionals to scheduled substances while regulations are being made. Interim orders are to be time-limited for a period of not more than six months and are similar to existing Ministerial orders under the *Poisons Act*.
- The Bill introduces scheduled substance licences for first aid providers to ensure timely granting of access to scheduled substances for first aid providers and to enable access to be suspended or revoked for non-compliance with licence conditions.
- The Bill makes changes to administrative and legislative arrangements in relation to section 59E of the *Poisons Act 1971*, to improve processes regarding authorities to make drugs available to certain patients. The Bill also provides for the internal review of decisions on section 59E applications, with the right of review to be available to the practitioner concerned as well as the affected patient.
- The Bill seeks to amend the *Poisons Act 1971* to amend or remove a number of outdated provisions to better reflect and support contemporary practice. Changes include removing the provisions relating to telegrams, updating provisions to provide the option of electronic recording of Poisons information and updating outdated terminology.
- Some other minor matters dealt with by the Bill include:
  - requiring that veterinary surgeons must be practicing in Tasmania to prescribe narcotic substances and certain restricted substances within Tasmania;

- extending the term of wholesale chemist licenses to up to two years to reduce the regulatory burden on licensees; and
- updating the provisions regarding notification to the Secretary in relation to notifiable restricted substances or narcotic substances and notifying drug seeking behaviour.