

Changes to Cross Jurisdiction Prescribing

What Are Stimulant Medications?

Stimulant medications are substances that stimulate the central nervous system and increase the level of dopamine in the brain¹. Stimulant medications have been found to be highly effective in managing both core symptoms and lifestyle impairments associated with ADHD². It is important that those whose ADHD treatment includes stimulant medication are aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding the acquisition of this medication. Rules regarding stimulant medication and interstate travel have recently changed due to revisions to the code on Schedule 8 medications.

What Is Schedule 8?

Schedule 8 is one of ten (10) possible classifications for substances controlled by the Therapeutic Goods Administration. Schedule 8 substances are fit to be made available, but require rules regarding their 'manufacture, supply, distribution, possession and use'³. Stimulants medications classified under Schedule 8 include dexamfetamine, lisdexamfetamine (Vyvanse®), and methylphenidate (Ritalin®, Ritalin LA®, Concerta®).



Impact on Interstate Prescribing

The prescribing code for Schedule 8 medicines was updated last year, with the latest version of the code published in December 2023. This has implications for the dispensing of stimulant medications in Western Australia for individuals with prescriptions written by prescribers residing in other Australian states⁴. Previously, interstate scripts could not be filled in WA and required individuals to travel to the state in which the script was written to have it filled.




¹ (Rubia et al., 2014)

² (Boland et al., 2020)

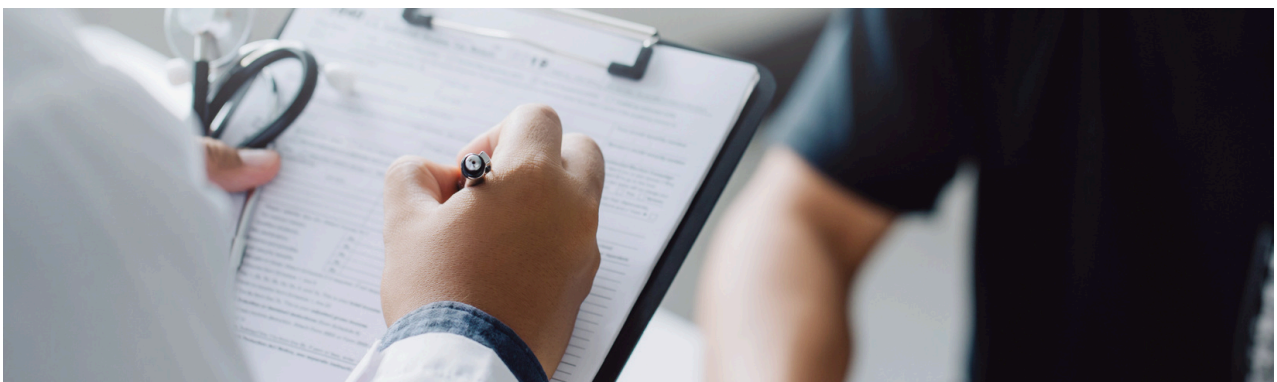
³ (Department of Health and Aged Care, 2024)

⁴ Ibid 3

As of the latest revisions to the Schedule 8 code, the provision of stimulant medication in WA using prescriptions from another is permitted under the following conditions⁵.

 The patient must:	 The prescriber must:	 The prescription must:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be a Western Australian resident with a Western Australian address listed on the prescription.• Meet all usual criteria for stimulant medications⁶.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be authorised under the WA Medicines and Poisons legislation. To achieve authorisation, prescribers must fill out a written application template provided by the Department of Health⁷.• Be a psychiatrist or paediatrician• Have issued the prescription on or after 13th of December 2023.• Issue the prescription via a telehealth consultation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include essential information such as patient date of birth, repeat interval, and directions for use.• Be retained at the dispensing WA pharmacy, unless the prescription is fully electronic.• Be for one of the three approved stimulant medications (dexamfetamine, lisdexamfetamine, or methylphenidate).

It is important that those who require stimulant medications understand the current rules and regulations regarding these substances so that they are empowered to ensure that their needs are met both within and outside of their state of residence.



⁵ (Department of Health, 2024)

⁶ Children under 2 cannot be on stimulant medication and children under 4 cannot be on stimulant medications except under special conditions. Individuals 13 and over must complete a urine test to receive a prescription for stimulant medication (AADPA, 2024)

⁷ (Medicines and Poisons Regulation Branch, n.d.)

Further information on Schedule 8 can be found at:
<https://www.health.wa.gov.au/>

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