



# Prescriber Newsletter

## January 2012

Hi all – this is the first SWEP newsletter to keep you up to date with any changes or information you might need. This issue has information on the new prioritization matrix, the way that Clinical Advisors work at SWEP, progress on the Prescriber Manuals, Prescription form updates and loads of other news.

If you would like to make a contribution to the newsletter, please send it to me at [wendyh@bhs.org.au](mailto:wendyh@bhs.org.au) and I will endeavour to include your story in the next edition.

It's over 12 months since the SWEP became the State-wide A&EP provider and we have made many gains in the time since we commenced. Currently, on your advice, we assist over 35,000 aged and disabled people to gain or maintain their safety and independence and we are working towards a fairer way to ensure equity of access to the subsidy.

**Registration and credentialing processes** are now well in place, with over 3,100 prescribers registered across the state. While for some this has been a bit of a chore, most prescribers have received their credentials with the appropriate level of recognition and have moved easily into the new system. The breakdown of registered prescribers by discipline appears below.

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Registrants</b>
Continence Nurses (includes Urology Nurses)	234
Orthotists	127
Occupational Therapists	1406
Podiatrists	220
Physiotherapists	1216
Speech Pathologists	73

For each discipline at least 30% of registrants are rated as Red prescribers in at least one category. I continue to welcome queries about credentialed status to ensure the most appropriate level of recognition is applied.

Clinical Advisors are now working to review prescriptions for those without local clinical supervisors, and feedback from those supported in their prescribing has been overwhelmingly positive. It is important to understand that while the Advisors review prescriptions on behalf of SWEP, they are not available through SWEP to give general advice.

The Advisors are, however, in the process of developing a series of **Prescriber Manuals** which have begun to appear on the SWEP web-site. These are designed to give prescribers guidance on where to get relevant equipment information, links to evidence available, and preferred assessment tools.

The first of these on Transfer Equipment, Hoists and Slings is on the web-site now on this link { <http://swep.bhs.org.au/node/427> }.

The advisors have also been assisting the SWEP in developing the “**Priority of Access Guidelines**”, available on this link { <http://swep.bhs.org.au/node/429> }. Examples of “Implications of non- provision” for some equipment categories are found in this document, and should assist prescribers to hone their information to SWEP on the needs of their clients. Keep in mind that the “Implications of non-provision” information is not intended to limit equipment provided to your clients, but to ensure every-one understands the order in which clients receive the subsidy for equipment.

Of course, if equipment is available in our **re-issue stock** that is also provided straight away where-ever possible. This process will improve with time as the re-issue stock is now being centralised and a single database is to be made available for your use. You may be aware that SWEP has awarded the contract for **repairs and reissue** to Chemtronics as the state-wide service provider. All of the equipment in the Chemtronics warehouse will be cleaned, serviced, and fully maintained before we re-issue it. Stock is being transferred to the warehouse staged over several months and we should be finally settled into a fully operational re-issue process by mid-March 2012. At that time you will have access to view the statewide database of reissue equipment. We will advise you of how this system will work closer to the implementation date.

Many prescribers continue to lament the loss of **capacity to trial equipment** for their clients. Trialing equipment has never been the A&EP program’s responsibility, however, we are aware that many A&EP Issuing Centres allowed access to reissue stock

for this purpose. Some prescribers are of the view that SWEP has removed this capacity, however it was never allowed under A&EP Guidelines. We have had some preliminary discussions with the Independent Living Centre with regard to their equipment library, and this work will continue in 2012. We are also working with Chemtronics, who may be able to allow prescribers and clients access to review reissue equipment at their warehouse.

We are very aware that historically, in an effort to meeting the needs of their clients, A&EP Issuing Centres have sometimes exercised a more liberal interpretation of the '**Available Items List**' guidelines than SWEP is able to maintain. Requests for equipment that appear to fall outside the overarching DHS guidelines are being reviewed by the SWEP Management team and DHS. Our Clinical Advisors are also providing input as required. Prescribers will be advised of any relevant changes. In the meantime, we are building a repository of these requests that will be used should any review of the DHS guidelines occur in the future.

A number if you have identified areas for **improvement on the prescription forms**, which we are currently working on. Once these amendments have been made you will be notified by email, the website or this newsletter. Issues being addressed include:

- Expanding free text boxes and removing scroll bars so that all text can be viewed once printed
- Dedicated fields for supplier and product codes
- Inclusion of field for delivery instructions
- The wheelchair prescription form will be amended to include scooters and strollers in the heading
- A Low Cost Items prescription form and picklist

Early this year SWEP will be assisting Monash University in providing education on **prescribing assistive technology** for 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> year OT students. We have been working with the VMSS inservicing provided by the ILC since the inception of vehicle modification funding in 2008, and are working with this organisation to review and expand training options for prescribers in other SWEP funded assistive technology.

Our Customer Service Team field many questions on the exact process of making an application to SWEP for subsidy, from assessment through to filling out the eligibility form, the correct prescription to use and which picklist to use. SWEP is developing some user friendly **application instructions** which will ultimately include a training module you can down-load and use for novice prescribers. A new table of links between picklists and scripts should also assist this process { <http://swep.bhs.org.au/node/425> }.

While our long term goal is for you to be able to **lodge and submit your application** on line, this will not be an option in the short to medium term. In the interim, there are currently five different options for you to lodge to your applications including:

1. By post
  - PO Box 1993 Bakery Hill 3354
2. By fax
  - (03) 5333 8111
3. By email (ensuring that you do not include any identifying client information in the subject line). SWEP's practice is to use the first 3 letters of the client's given name and surname, DOB, and SWEP client ID (if known).
  - SWEP\_CentralIntake@bhs.org.au
4. Through the 'Connecting Care' secure messaging and e-referral system (imminent)
5. Through the secure 'S2S' Service coordination messaging and e-referral system (in development)

Please note, that regardless of your preferred lodgment system, all applications, regardless of program type are received by SWEP Central Intake and allocated to the relevant programs for triage.

To better stream-line our processes and provide prescribers with a more user-friendly, consistent and responsive program, an **internal restructure** of the SWEP Management team's responsibilities is underway and there will be some changes including:

- Our current A&EP Manager, Simone Rosewall has commenced maternity leave in early January 2012.
- Our Children's Services Manager, Acushla Thompson is now responsible for all A&EP children's applications (0-18 years). Acushla's email address is [Acushlat@bhs.org.au](mailto:Acushlat@bhs.org.au)
- Warren Loorham has assumed responsibility for A&EP Adults applications and components of his existing role within Procurement & Logistics. Warren's email address is [Warrenl@bhs.org.au](mailto:Warrenl@bhs.org.au)
- Kylie Harrison is taking well-earned leave and Joanne Haye has been appointed Team Leader for SAEAS. Joanne's email address is [JoanneH@bhs.org.au](mailto:JoanneH@bhs.org.au)

Please continue to provide your feedback on the functioning of the SWEP and we will endeavour to constantly improve our service to you and your clients.

I wish you a safe and prosperous 2012

Wendy Hubbard

Chief Allied Health Officer – SWEP