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# MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release



## GPs urge to close the loop in ePrescribing

As the Australian Department of Health and Ageing continues to work with The National E-Health Transition Authority Limited (NEHTA) on implementation packages for ePrescribing, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) highlights the need for any electronic transmission of prescriptions (ETP) program to report back to a GP that a script or a repeat has been filled.

Prof Ron Tomlins, Chair of the RACGP e-Health Working Group, said that a 'report back' functionality, agreed upon by both the GP and patient, would be particularly valuable for patients with complex health care needs such as, for example, those on multiple medications or those with low health literacy.

"GPs have to keep up to date with their patients' medication history, hence they need to know if a patient has had a prescription dispensed by a pharmacist or not. This information is not available from the prescribing data alone as between 10-30% of scripts are not filled," Prof Tomlins said.

"This is a patient safety issue; by closing the loop once a drug is dispensed or a repeat filled the doctor knows which brand has been dispensed and how much the patient might actually be taking," he said.

Prof Tomlins added that such a system could provide some insight into prescription shopping behaviours, which are a risk to patients' health.

RACGP President Dr Chris Mitchell said that the college is committed to supporting ETP programs that meet NEHTA standards for secure messaging.

"The RACGP takes its standard setting and quality improvement role seriously and any new development in ePrescribing must be in the interest of our patients," he said.

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### Media contacts

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### About the RACGP

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) is responsible for maintaining standards for quality clinical practice, education and training, and research in Australian general practice. The RACGP represents the majority of Australia's urban and rural general practitioners. Visit [www.racgp.org.au](http://www.racgp.org.au).