e-Scripts to link GPs, pharmacies
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ELECTRONIC prescribing direct from the doctor's office to the pharmacy is one step closer, with the federal Health Department seeking tenders for a consultancy to map workflow processes across the spectrum of drugs prescribing and dispensing scenarios. E-medication is an integral part of HealthConnect, the planned national network for sharing people's health information between authorised healthcare providers in both the private and public sectors, along with greater use of IT systems for clinical decision support, patient administration, management, online ordering and supply chain.

The project also involves the bidder determining how e-signatures may used in prescribing process from legal, technological and workflow perspectives, and establish which stages can be automated.

"E-prescribing, in which the prescription is downloaded from the prescriber's system and uploaded into the dispenser's system without the need for rekeying, should eliminate transcription errors," the request for tender says.

"And the full potential for e-prescribing will not be realised unless the use of e-signatures is progressed at the national level."

The project involves detailed mapping of the activities of all prescribers (including GPs, specialists, nurses and dentists) and all dispensers (doctors, pharmacists, nurses) in all settings (hospitals, community facilities, pharmacies, residential care).

The successful tenderer may also need to communicate with stakeholders including health consumer representatives, the medical software industry and various pharmaceutical and prescribing standards bodies.

It is anticipated the project will be completed within two months. The closing date for the tender is November 22.

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