

# Prescription shopping information service

Original article by: [Michael Tam](#)



## [Registration Form](#)

Complete and fax to **(02) 6124 7820**.

**Once registered available 24/7 by calling 1800 631 181**

There used to be a great service to doctors, GPs in particular, called the "Doctor Shopping Hotline". You could ring up to see if a particular patient had been "doctor shopping", i.e., seeing multiple practitioners to obtain prescriptions for medications (usually opiates and benzodiazepines). However, this service was scrapped due to (misguided) concerns about privacy and issues with funding.

However, Medicare Australia (what is now the HIC) has reinstated a new program, the "Prescription shopping service" which by large has a similar role but a somewhat expanded scope. Rather than simply focussing on drugs of addiction, it looks more generically at people who "obtain medicine in excess of medical need", though why someone would want to stockpile antihypertensives or antibiotics I do not know.

Unfortunately, to access this service, you have to jump through a few hoops.

### Step 1

Download the [registration form](#), complete it and then fax it to the Medicare Australia number: (02) 6124 7820.

### Step 2

Wait for Medicare Australia to supply you with an "access number".

### Step 3

Once registered, you can call the service on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on **1800 631 181**. You need to have your "access number" on hand.

At this time, you will have to call the access the service but apparently Medicare Australia is thinking about an on-line system. You can both get information over the phone about your patient and also have a "summary report" faxed over.

[Click here for a sample report.](#)

## Reference links

(1) Medicare Australia: [Prescription Shopping Project](#)

(2) Medicare Australia: [Prescription Shopping Project FAQ](#)

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