

PBS Authorities – Changes to ankylosing spondylitis program

We understand having access to PBS-subsidised medicines can be critical to patient care. That's why Services Australia and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing are continuing to work together to increase the number of PBS medicines that can be requested and approved using the Online PBS Authorities system (the system). This will include adalimumab, bimekizumab, certolizumab pegol, etanercept, golimumab, infliximab, ixekizumab, secukinumab, tofacitinib and upadacitinib for the treatment of ankylosing spondylitis from 1 October 2025.

These changes will make it easier for you to request authority approval for these medicines from Services Australia. You will no longer need to submit written authority applications, details of the proposed prescriptions and test results for certain medicines and treatment phases. Instead, you will be able to use the system to apply for authority approval and provide evidence digitally.

We recommend you document your patient's baseline values and previous treatment failures in their records as you may need to provide previously supplied information in your application to demonstrate patient eligibility for change, recommencement and continuing treatments.

Summary of changes from 1 October 2025

Medicine	Authority Level	Details of Changes
Ankylosing spondylitis – Biosimilar brands		
adalimumab; etanercept; infliximab i.v.	Online / Telephone: Initial treatment  	There are no changes to the administration of initial applications for biosimilar brands of biological medicines. Authority applications can be made digitally using the Online PBS Authorities system or by telephone.
	Online / Telephone: Change/recommencement treatment  	There are no changes to the administration of change/recommencement applications for biosimilar brands of biological medicines. Authority applications can be made digitally using the Online PBS Authorities system or by telephone.
	STREAMLINED: First continuing treatment	There are no changes to the administration of first continuing applications for biosimilar brands of biological medicines. These remain Authority Required (STREAMLINED).
	STREAMLINED: Subsequent continuing treatment	There are no changes to the administration of subsequent continuing applications for biosimilar brands of biological medicines. These remain Authority Required (STREAMLINED).
	Online / Telephone: Balance of supply (Initial treatment only)  	There are no changes to the administration of balance of supply applications for biosimilar brands of biological medicines. Authority applications can be made digitally using the Online PBS Authorities system or by telephone.

Medicine	Authority Level	Details of Changes
Ankylosing spondylitis – Originator brands		
adalimumab; bimekizumab; certolizumab pegol; etanercept; golimumab; infliximab; ixekizumab; secukinumab; tofacitinib; upadacitinib	Online / Written: Initial treatment  	Authority applications can be made digitally using the Online PBS Authorities system or in writing . When submitted online, the application will require assessment by a Services Australia operator (process known as a Full (Delayed) Assessment). When assessed you will receive an outcome notification directly to your Health Professional Online Service (HPOS) mailbox.
	Online / Written: Grandfather treatment (bimekizumab only)   	Authority applications can be made digitally using the Online PBS Authorities system or in writing. When submitted online, the application will require assessment by a Services Australia operator (process known as a Full (Delayed) Assessment). When assessed you will receive an outcome notification directly to your HPOS mailbox.
	Online / Written: Change/recommencement treatment   	Authority applications can be made digitally using the Online PBS Authorities system or in writing . When submitted online, the application may still require assessment by a Services Australia operator (process known as a Full (Delayed) Assessment). When assessed you will receive an outcome notification directly to your HPOS mailbox.
	Online / Written: First continuing and subsequent continuing treatment (adalimumab, etanercept and infliximab IV only)  	Authority applications can be made digitally using the Online PBS Authorities system or in writing.
	Online / Written: Continuing treatment (bimekizumab, certolizumab pegol, golimumab, infliximab SC, ixekizumab, secukinumab, tofacitinib and upadacitinib only)  	Authority applications can be made digitally using the Online PBS Authorities system or in writing.
	Online / Telephone: Balance of supply  	There are no changes to the administration of balance of supply applications for originator brands. Authority applications can be made digitally using the Online PBS Authorities system or by telephone.
 Request authority online – Immediate Assessment  Request authority online – Full (Delayed) Assessment  Request authority by telephone  Upload form via HPOS or post		

Important Information

Release of information

The transfer of a patient's personal information, including baseline values and previous failures, must be arranged by health professionals and the patient.

Submitting PBS Written Applications through Health Professional Online Services (HPOS) form upload

When submitting PBS authority forms through HPOS form upload, it is important to remember that only yourself or your delegate/s are authorised to do this.

Make sure you've:

- linked your prescriber number to your Provider Digital Access (PRODA) account for HPOS; and
- Set up your delegations in HPOS.

Visit servicesaustralia.gov.au/HPOS for more information on how to Link your Health Identifiers to HPOS and Manage delegations.

Reminders

PBS Authorities – written authority application forms

To align with PBS listing changes, forms are updated on the first of the month. Using the most recent form will help avoid delays in obtaining authority approval. Search for QC 31841 on the Services Australia website to access the most recent ankylosing spondylitis forms.

Correct online authority number

When prescribing PBS medicines via the Online PBS Authorities system, ensure you have selected the correct medicine to match what is on the prescription. This will avoid delays with providing patients with the medication they require.

Ensuring you are providing accurate data

It's important to ensure you are providing accurate and up to date information when completing an authority application. Failure to do so may result in your authority request being rejected.

More information

Contact **PBS Complex Drugs** on 1800 700 270 for further information about these changes.

For more information about the **Online PBS Authorities system** visit

www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/hppbsauthorities

Services Australia has a broad range of educational resources on the **Health Professional Education Resources** website. This includes simulations, podcast and an infographic on the Online PBS Authorities system. Visit **<https://hpe.servicesaustralia.gov.au/pharmaceutical-benefits-scheme.html>**

If you require additional assistance or have any queries, please email **authority.comms.change@servicesaustralia.gov.au**.