



26 June 2024

RECENT CHANGES TO LEGISLATION – MAKING IT EASIER FOR NURSE PRACTITIONERS TO PRESCRIBE OPIOID TREATMENT MEDICATIONS

There have been some recent reforms at the federal level to the **Health Legislation Amendment (Removal of Requirement for a Collaborative Arrangement) Bill 2024** that have important implications for the ODT Program in Australia.

In May 2024, the [legal requirement](#) for Nurse Practitioners (NPs) and eligible midwives to be part of a 'collaborative arrangement' with a medical practitioner to provide certain subsidised services to patients was removed.

From 1 November 2024, NPs and eligible midwives can provide services subsidised by the MBS and prescribe certain medicines on the PBS without sign-off from a medical practitioner.

Harm Reduction Australia has been advocating for some time that NPs could be playing a much greater role in the delivery of ODT in Australia especially in regional and rural areas (but also metro and greater metro areas). We believe, these recent reforms remove some of the major barriers to this occurring.

If you are interested in these issues, come along to the upcoming HRA **2024 National Harm Reduction Forum on 28 August**. The forum is free to attend and will be held entirely online. It will include a 'deep dive' session on ODT with key leading nurse practitioners and their representative organisations presenting on the impact of these recent reforms for ODTP. See the link to register for the 2024 National Harm Reduction Forum and the ODT Deep Dive on the main HRA website.

HRA will continue to work with key stakeholders, through our **Treatment Equity Project** to make the most of this reform including how it might dovetail with last year's PBS reforms (aka the 'affordability reforms') to create an even more accessible ODTP in Australia.