

Introduction to Communicare Release 21.1

Telstra Health is delighted to share with you our recent update to Communicare.

The 21.1 release is feature rich and includes significant improvements to medication management that will assist clinicians from a safety and quality perspective.

We encourage our Communicare customers to upgrade to 21.1 to take advantage of the improved workflows, which should have a positive impact on your health service.

Overview of key enhancements:

- Improved performance and reliability with My Health record integrations
- Compliance with legislative changes mandating COVID-19 vaccinations and AIR upload administration
- Enhanced medication safety with improved supply and administer workflows
- Improved prescribing decision support with interaction checking using the MIMS drug database to assist clinicians with safety and quality
- Improved clinical workflows for nurses ordering and administering medications as defined within their scope of practice
- Improved ability to record of all patients' medications, including those that may have been prescribed by another clinician or service
- Clarity of workflows, improved ability to record and document medication requests and consolidate ordering for rural prescribing where medications are packed elsewhere and returned to a health service for supply to their patients

Overview of key enhancements specific to Medications and Clinical Items

Medications Enhancements:

- Prescription, medication order/charting and medication history (prescribed by another clinician or service) workflow separation
- Supply and administer workflow improvements for the health service drug cupboard
- Introduction of scope of practice to facilitate nurse initiated medications and protocol driven nurse medication ordering
- Introduction of medication requests and consolidated ordering for contracted pharmacy supply of patient specific inventory

Central Clinical Item Changes:

- Cancer screening
- Gender information
- Generic COVID-19 vaccinations
- Health Under Five Kids (NT) dataset qualifier changes
- ASQ-TRAK Ages & Stages Questionnaire, Smokerlyzer® and Assessment; Indigenous Risk Impact Screen

Checklist to support a successful upgrade to version 21.1

To ensure a successful upgrade to version 21.1 (v21.1), your dedicated Communicare Administrator will require time to assess and prepare your Communicare database, particularly for the medication enhancements and and new clinical items.

Workflows and reports may be impacted by the medication database changes and will need review. You will need clinical input when reviewing and updating workflows that clinicians use for medications.

The following checklist will assist you in setting up the Medication enhancements and some of the key Clinical Item changes.

01

Key questions to ask:

What specific questions should you ask related to the new enhancements and changes in Communicare?

02

Key considerations:

What will you need to consider with your current version, workflows, training and configuration?

03

Actions required:

What specific actions will you need to take for a seamless upgrade?

Communicare offers a dedicated support program for health services who believe they will require assistance to achieve this level of preparation. Please visit the Communicare Portal and raise a ticket for the Communicare Service Desk ('work request') to discuss our Professional Services support packages.

Will you use Communicare to manage medications, that is, write a prescription, create a medication order (F9) and add medication history (Shift+F9)?	Change management for the concept of 'write a prescription', 'create a medication order' and 'medication history'?	<input type="checkbox"/> Training for prescribers <input type="checkbox"/> Training for nurses who may create medication orders and initiate verbal telephone orders (VTO) <input type="checkbox"/> Review user rights for medication history
	Use of VTO as part of 'create a medication order' Configuration for VTO- authorisers must be part of the provider list	<input type="checkbox"/> Workflows for VTOs, particularly where authorisation is from an external medical officer (e.g. DMO)
	Consider if you require changes to default medication label	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to Communicare Implementation Team for assistance to change medication label
	Understand impact of new medication types referred to as medication orders and medication history on reports	<input type="checkbox"/> Check local medications reports to see if they require any changes to accommodate the new medication types of 'medication order' and 'medication history' items – A Telstra Health Application Specialist may be able to suggest optimisation of your reports based on new functionality.

<p>Will you use <i>scope of practice</i> for nurse initiated medications and nurse ordering?</p>	<p>Configuration requirements -system parameters; configure formulary; assign scope of practice and formulary rights to relevant user groups</p> <p>Workflow to be established when using this for the first time</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Formularies configuration - you may require multiple formularies if using different scope of practice lists for different user groups</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enable formulary and tick 'use as scope of practice' list 2. Formularies also have 'encounter place' configuration
	<p>Note: Scope of practice enables the health service to set up Communicare so that nurses are able to create a medication order within a configured formulary, without a VTO</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> USER GROUP parameter: Set each 'user group' with which scope of practice list is to be used</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> USER GROUP parameter: ensure 'user groups' have formulary rights</p>
	<p>Formulary no longer associated with formulary rights and only presents users with a medication list – it is now the bookmark for usual medications (visibility)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Review PROVIDER – Verbal Order parameter (unchanged, but check/test):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. use scope of practice list to stop the requirement for VTO 2. for schedules (S1 to S9) tick those that require VTO e.g. S4 or S8 (note these should be the same as the current settings)
<p>Will you use <i>administer and supply</i> (Ctrl+F9) functionality?</p>	<p>Configure medications management – system parameters</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Enable medications management module – system parameters</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> User rights for supply and administer</p>
	<p>Workflow considerations for administer and supply</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Establish workflows for medication administer and supply</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Consider reporting requirements – you may need to create new reports to capture additional information</i></p>
	<p>Additional configuration for VTO granularity (schedules for providers by encounter place)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Review PROVIDER – Verbal Order parameter:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. tick scope of practice list to stop the requirement for VTO 2. for schedules (S1 to S9) tick those that require VTO e.g. S4 or S8 (note these should be the same as the current settings)
	<p>Consider if you require changes to default medication label</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Refer to the Communicare Professional Services team for assistance to change medication labels</p>

<p>Will you use imprest management which is available with medications management (administer and supply)?</p>	<p>Configuration for user access and associated workflow considerations for imprest management if to be used</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Assign user access to imprest management <input type="checkbox"/> Set up an imprest
	<p>Configuration of supplier/s</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Set up supplier/s in address book
<p>Will you use medication requests?</p>	<p>Configuration requirements – system parameters</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Enable Medication request (rename if required) – prescription forms tab – system parameters
	<p>Consider if you require changes to default to medication request template</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Consider the option to create medication request by default <input type="checkbox"/> Configure medication pick up locations – encounter place table
	<p>Workflow considerations</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish workflow <input type="checkbox"/> Contact the Communicare Professional Services team if you require customised medication request template/s <input type="checkbox"/> Consider reporting requirements – you may need to create new reports to capture additional information
<p>Will you be using Consolidated ordering?</p> <p><i>Please note: medication requests must be turned on to use this.</i></p>	<p>Configuration – system parameters</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Enable consolidated order on the prescription forms tab – system parameters
	<p>Configuration – users</p> <p>Configuration – printer assignments</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Assign user rights to manage consolidated orders <input type="checkbox"/> You can set up user printer assignments if required
	<p>Configuration of supplier/s</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Set up supplier/s in address book
	<p>Consider if you require changes to default consolidated order template</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Contact the Communicare Professional Services team if customised consolidated order template is required

Do you use Rural Prescribing (HCP) or have had a migration that included medications from another clinical information system?

Pre-upgrade medication database check

Unprescribed medications

Medications with no start and/or end date

Check if you have patients that have regular medications that have no prescription number (never prescribed) – RUN REPORT: Unprescribed Medications – this is a list of patients who have any regular medication records where the medication is yet to be prescribed. This situation can arise in the following cases:

1. the rural prescription is used and a medication was added as a regular medication but the rural prescription was not generated

2. some regular medication data was imported from another database (such as Medical Director) but has not been converted or re-prescribed as a MIMS medication in Communicare

If any of these are STILL RELEVANT/ACTUAL regular medications that need to remain on the patient's record, then they need to be re-prescribed before the upgrade to remain on the medication summary

Check MIMS version – ensure you have the most up to date version

Check local medications reports to see if referencing the table PAT_REG_MED_PRESCRIPTION_VIEW
If identify any, then change to reference to the table PAT_REGULAR_MEDICATION_VIEW

Configuration – system parameters clinical

Tick use health centre prescription defaults on system parameters

Tick create medication request by default – prescription form tab – system parameters

If applicable, tick print S8 medications on separate page

Clinical Items

<p>Have you created any COVID-19 clinical items locally?</p>	<p>If you have clinical items with recalls attached, they will be disrupted by the new central COVID-19 immunisation clinical items</p> <p>If you have used Central items and no recall protocols, there will be no issue</p>	<p>If you are unsure, consult with our Communicare Professional Services team – we will be able to provide a script to identify any local clinical items with COVID-19 export codes – then you can take corrective action as required</p>
<p>Do you use cancer screening clinical items?</p>	<p>There have been some significant changes to the Cancer screening clinical items</p>	<p>You may wish to consider training and clinician familiarisation with the clinical items and consider the new recall protocols</p>
<p>Do you have a requirement to record gender information, transitioning status and cancer screening requirements?</p>	<p>There is a new gender information clinical item with summary qualifiers</p>	<p>Review the new clinical item and consider workflows and staff familiarisation requirements for your health service</p>
<p>Do you have local clinical item assessing Indigenous risk smoking impact – ages and stages?</p>	<p>There is a new central clinical item: ASQ-TRAK Ages & Stages Questionnaire, Smokerlyzer® and Assessment; Indigenous Risk Impact Screen</p>	<p>Review and update letter templates if a local qualifier is the same as in the new central clinical item and therefore disabled</p>
<p>Do you use the Healthy Under 5 Kids (HUK5) dataset?</p>	<p>There have been some changes to the dataset</p>	<p>Review the updated HUK5 clinical items and consider any implications for your local workflows and/or staff familiarisation</p>

Please note, this is not an exhaustive checklist to prepare your health service to upgrade to version 21.1. We recommend that you review the final Release Notes for the full list of changes and enhancements.

Learn more

📞 1800 798 441 | ✉ communicare@health.telstra.com