



Australia
(Formerly EAN Australia)

A National Product Catalogue for Healthcare

nehta

Announcing a new supply chain management system for Australian public healthcare institutions that will improve patient safety while delivering significant efficiency gains to governments and suppliers alike.



The National E-Health Transition Authority (NEHTA), in association with GS1 Australia, is rolling out a National Product Catalogue (NPC). Endorsed by all State, Territory and Federal Health Departments, the NPC will become 'the' source of item master data for public health institutions seeking to purchase medicines, medical devices and other necessary healthcare items.

The NPC is hosted by GS1 Australia on their data synchronisation solution, EANnet®, and incorporates the Australian Catalogue of Medicines (ACOM).

The NPC will also provide the foundation for swift product recalls and precise product tracking. This will allow flawed, out-of-date or missing stock to be efficiently located and replaced before it becomes a patient safety issue. It will also reduce the mis-identification of medications and medical products which can lead to adverse patient outcomes.

At a time when the healthcare sector is under considerable cost pressure to meet current and future demands for services, the NPC is expected to save the sector up to \$200 million per annum by ensuring accurate, valid and up-to-date product data, and improved communications and supply chain operations.

The bottom line

The NPC will transform procurement in public healthcare institutions, providing significant benefits to both suppliers and purchasers. In particular, as a single source of electronic procurement information it will benefit suppliers by:

- Creating one standard process for providing item details to all health departments. A myriad of existing paper forms and specification sheets will be replaced by one electronic system
- Improving product visibility and reach across Australia's largest healthcare buyers
- Ensuring that pricing information is secure, and only available to supplier nominated trading partners.
- Reducing the effort and cost involved in communicating product, price and medicines information to public health institutions
- Reducing ordering errors and costs associated with processing invoice reconciliation, credit claims and returns
- Decreasing 'out-of-stocks' and supplier capital tied up in safety stocks
- Significantly reducing the time and cost of introducing new products onto the market
- Streamlining notifications of product recalls
- Streamlining suppliers data collation processes



Implementing the NPC

Government health departments have directed that their procurement systems leverage the NPC as soon as possible, and to fully adopt the NPC in their procurement processes. Suppliers are asked to have their product information available on the NPC by June 2007.

As it will typically take between three and six months to complete NPC implementation, companies are encouraged to start the process as soon as possible.

Suppliers who have not completed their NPC implementation by this date could risk missing out on public health institution tenders and contract renewal processes. In order for suppliers to understand their role and responsibilities in this process, a series of training and information sessions will be conducted by NEHTA and GS1 Australia over the coming months.

Industry Testimonial

"We strongly endorse the NPC. Without accurate data internally, and synchronised externally, purchasing, inventory management, billing, product tracking etc continually fail. There are errors and delays which need to be repetitively fixed and some can impact patient safety. The NPC will help our business processes to execute flawlessly – first time every time, and that is the definition of excellence."

Mario Carniato
E-Business Supply Chain Manager
Kimberly-Clark Australia

Industry Testimonial

"Clifford Hallam Healthcare (CH2) strongly endorses the NPC as a central source of product, pricing and medicines information for the Healthcare Sector. As the leading provider of healthcare logistics solutions in Australia, CH2 believes that the ability of our industry to bring about efficiencies in supply chain management and embark on collaborative programs, relies on the timely exchange of up-to-date, complete and accurate item master data. The NPC provides a whole-of-industry approach to meet this challenge."

Peter Kelly
Chief Executive Officer
Clifford Hallam Healthcare

The National Product Catalogue

The following diagram illustrates the National Product Catalogue and its components:



So what do you need to do to be a part of this existing initiative and start to reap the benefits of the National Product Catalogue?

1. If your organisation is not already one of the 15,000 members of GS1 Australia, you will need to join. Membership will enable you to register for the NPC and will provide you access to a range of membership benefits, such as the use of the GS1 System, access to education and training sessions, ongoing support, plus much more. Information about membership and the benefits is available at www.gs1au.org
2. Register online for the NPC. This step requires registration to EANnet, and for medicines suppliers, registration for ACOM. Registration information is available at www.gs1au.org/EANnet
3. Become EANnet Ready by following the steps contained in the EANnet Ready Checklist (National Product Catalogue) available at www.gs1au.org/EANnet This will involve understating the data requirements, gathering and validating your data and finally loading your data to the NPC.

Once your product, pricing and medicines information is loaded, keeping it up to date is critical. Every time a new product is added, obsoleted or pricing is changed, you should update the NPC.

For further information regarding the National Product Catalogue or for assistance in loading your product and pricing information you can contact:

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