



# MyMedicare patient registration – Frequently asked questions

Version 1.0 – 14 September 2023

## Why should I register?

Registration in MyMedicare will provide a formal signal to your practice and your GP that you see them as your regular care team and will help them provide better coordinated and continuous healthcare.

Your MyMedicare practice and preferred GP will appear on your My Health Record, unless you choose not to display this, so other health professionals you may see – for example at public hospitals – will know who to talk to about your regular care.

Registration in MyMedicare will initially provide the most benefit to people who need access to longer telehealth consultations with their GP, for example older Australians, people who seek mental health care from their GP and people with chronic and complex health conditions. From November 2023, the triple bulk billing incentive will also apply to the longer telehealth items for registered patients who have a Commonwealth Concession Card or are under 16 years of age.

Residents of Residential Aged Care Homes will benefit from registering with their GP under MyMedicare, with new incentives being introduced in 2024 to support more regular proactive visits and care planning from GPs and practices.

## Is registration compulsory?

No, registration in MyMedicare is voluntary. Patients will still be able to access MBS-funded and DVA equivalent primary care services if they are not registered in MyMedicare.

## Who can register? Is there a cost?

Registration in MyMedicare is voluntary and open to Australians who have a Medicare card or Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Veteran Card. There is no charge to register.

## Who should register for MyMedicare?

Evidence shows that seeing the same GP and health care team regularly improves health outcomes, so all Australians are encouraged to register with MyMedicare to reinforce their relationship with their regular practice and GP.

Initially, registration in MyMedicare will provide the most benefit to people who need access to longer telehealth services from their GP, aged care residents and people with chronic and complex health conditions.

This includes access to the triple bulk billing incentive for longer telehealth consultations for all registered patients with a Commonwealth Concession Card and children under 16 years of age.

New incentives and blended funding models to be linked to MyMedicare registration in the future will be identified through a Review of General Practice Incentives to be completed by early 2024. Further announcements are expected by mid-2024.

## Why are there patient eligibility requirements?

Patient eligibility requirements are designed to ensure patients have an existing relationship with a practice and GP before registering in MyMedicare. This relationship is important in delivering high-value ongoing care to patients. These requirements will also reduce the risk of other practices attempting to register patients that don't attend their practice.

Most patients will need to have 2 face-to-face visits with the same practice in the previous 24 months to be eligible to register. This is an appropriate threshold for most patients to show they attend a regular practice to access their care.

Patients who attend practices in remote areas, in Modified Monash Model (MMM) 6 and 7 locations, will only need to have 1 face-to-face visit with the same practice in the previous 24 months to register. This reduced requirement recognises the unique circumstances of people in remote areas and will support better access to general practice services.

Eligible visits can be billed through Medicare, DVA or a combination of both.

## How do I register for MyMedicare?

MyMedicare is voluntary for practices, providers and patients. The system is based on a dual consent process where both the practice and the patient need to consent. Patient registration can be completed in one of the following ways:

- Patients can commence the registration process in their Medicare online services (Medicare Online Account or the Express Plus Medicare mobile application) and the practice staff can then accept or decline the registration in MyMedicare system.
- Practice staff can commence the patient registration process in MyMedicare and patients can then complete the registration and provide consent in their Medicare online services.
- Patients can fill out a registration form at the practice and practice staff will then complete the registration in the MyMedicare system with the patient's consent captured on the form.

## I'm a DVA Veteran Card holder, is MyMedicare for me?

Yes, MyMedicare registration is open to all Australians, including people who receive DVA funded health services using a Veteran Gold or White Card.

DVA Veteran Card holders can register with MyMedicare using their Veteran Card or Medicare card (if they have one). Patients can only have one registration, which will apply to any relevant Medicare and/or DVA-funded service, regardless of if a Veteran Card or Medicare card has been used to register.

Patients who register with a DVA Veteran Card will need to fill out a registration form at the practice, as registration via Medicare online services can only be completed using a Medicare card. DVA clients who choose to use their Medicare card to register will have access to self-service features via their Medicare online services.

## **I live in a residential aged care home – how do I register?**

Patients in Residential Aged Care Homes (RACHs) will be able to register for MyMedicare by completing a registration form from their GP or online through their Medicare online services. They will not need to physically attend a practice for the purpose of completing their registration.

Where a patient is incapable of providing consent, as for other Medicare arrangements, a responsible person can consent on their behalf. 'Responsible person' means an adult person accompanying the patient or in whose care the patient has been placed, including the parent or guardian, a person who holds power of attorney or a guardianship order, or the next of kin.

The Department and Primary Health Networks (PHNs) will work with residential aged care providers to support patient registration, noting the importance of both the practice and patient providing informed consent for registration.

## **Will I be able to change practices?**

Yes, once a patient has registered with MyMedicare they will be able to change their registered practice at any time, noting eligibility requirements still apply. They will not need to inform their previous practice when registering with a new practice as the system will notify the previous practice of the change.

## **What is the process for a patient to change a practice or provider?**

A patient can change their registered practice at any time by creating a new registration via any of the registration methods, noting they will have to meet the eligibility criteria for the new practice to be able to register.

A patient can only have one active MyMedicare practice registration at any point in time. When a new registration is recorded, the previous registration will be automatically withdrawn and the practice will be notified. The patient can also change their preferred GP at any time using their Medicare online services or speaking with practice staff.

## **Is MyMedicare only available for general practices?**

MyMedicare will be available to accredited general practices, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) and Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS), nurse-led practices with a GP and other non-traditional practices, so long as they meet the registration eligibility criteria, including accreditation and provider requirements. A mobile, outreach or ACCHS/AMS practice may be exempted from accreditation requirements.

## What is the difference between MyMedicare and My Health Record?

MyMedicare is a new voluntary patient registration system that will enable patients to register with their regular general practice, preferred GP and primary care team to deliver greater continuity of care.

My Health Record is Australia's secure national electronic health record system. My Health Record is a secure online summary of a patient's clinical health information. It provides patients and their healthcare providers with access to vital health information at the point of care, including in an emergency. This can include shared health summary, current medicines and prescriptions, immunisation history, hospital discharge information and Medicare, DVA and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) claims history.

Unlike the My Health Record, MyMedicare will not hold clinical health information about the patient. Its purpose is to link the patient with their regular practice and support continuous care at that practice. The details of a patient's registered practice and preferred GP will be visible in the patient's My Health Record, unless they choose not to display this, so other treating clinicians can see who the patient's regular practice and preferred GP are.

More information on My Health Record is available at [www.healthdirect.gov.au/my-health-record](http://www.healthdirect.gov.au/my-health-record).

## Will MyMedicare create a two-tiered health system for patients?

MyMedicare will not create a two-tiered health system. Patients will still be able to access MBS-funded and DVA equivalent primary care at any practice through existing arrangements, regardless of whether they are registered in MyMedicare.

MyMedicare will enable the delivery of targeted funding for patients and practices to improve access to primary care and support wraparound care for people who need it most.

## What are the privacy protections if I register for MyMedicare?

A MyMedicare Privacy Notice will be available for patients prior to October 2023.

The notice will explain how the department will manage personal information consistent with our obligations under the Privacy Act and how we will collect, use and disclose information about MyMedicare program participants. The notice will be available on both the Department of Health and Aged Care and Services Australia websites and will also be provided through a range of other communication channels.

Patients should read this privacy notice together with other privacy-related information that medical practices give you about how they manage personal information.

## **Where do I go for support to register or if I am having difficulties completing my registration?**

From 1 October 2023 patients will find information on 'how to register' for MyMedicare on Services Australia's website, or by phoning the Medicare public line on 132 011.

## **Why is MyMedicare being implemented?**

MyMedicare responds to the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce recommendation for the Government to introduce a system of voluntary patient registration for general practice, delivering stronger relationships between patients and their care teams and supporting blended payments for person-centred care.

## **I live in a rural area – is MyMedicare for me?**

Registering with your practice in MyMedicare will enable you to access longer MBS-funded telephone consultations with your registered practice.

If you are under 16 or a concession card holder, the triple bulk billing incentive and its rural loading will apply for longer MBS telephone and video telehealth calls.

If you are an aged care resident, rural loadings will apply for the new MyMedicare incentives for regular visits and better care planning from your GP.

## **I'm happy with my current GP and our relationship. Should I still register?**

Yes. Registration in MyMedicare will formalise and strengthen your relationship with your general practice and preferred GP to improve health outcomes.

Once registered, you will be eligible for longer MBS-funded telephone consultations with your GP. If you are an aged care resident, your GP and practice will receive additional incentives to provide proactive care through regular visits and care planning.