

If you have an on-going condition you MAY be eligible for a Team Care Arrangement or Care Plan

What is a Care Plan?

Care Plans allow patients with *chronic medical illness* to undertake a prolonged, coordinated review with their GP and Practice Nurse and to get *subsidised access to Allied Health Services* through Medicare. There are **eligibility requirements** which your doctor is able to discuss with you.

What constitutes a *Chronic Medical Illness*?

A chronic medical illness is a defined medical condition lasting 3 months or more (or likely to last that long)

Examples of common chronic medical conditions in Australia are:

- Diabetes
- Chronic Pain
- Heart conditions
- Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS)
- Lung conditions (eg COPD / Severe asthma)
- Other Endocrine (hormone) conditions
- Previous or current cancer diagnosis
- Endometriosis
- Osteoporosis (thinning of the bones)
- Chronic bowel conditions
- Neurological or Brain conditions (eg - Congenital disorders, Parkinsons or MS)

Who can I see and how often?

Allied Health Practitioners:

Dietitians, podiatrists, physiotherapists, osteopaths, psychologists etc

Each Care plan allows **5 subsidised** allied health visits.

A care plan can be renewed every 12 months.

How will a Care Plan Benefit me?

A care plan has a number of benefits such as:

By having a Care Plan, you know that your medical team *understand* what medical issues you have and what *your priorities* are.

A care plan gives you the opportunity to *ask questions* and to learn about your specific medical conditions and what *treatment* you can expect.

After undertaking a care-plan, Medicare will subsidise a total of *5 visits* to one or more appropriate Allied Health Professionals, such as a physio or dietitian, to help you to optimise your well-being.

An example for you

Wendy has early onset osteoarthritis and diabetes and undertakes a care plan to address all of her health issues.

We identify a number of priorities for Wendy during her consultations here.

While Wendy's medical care has previously focused on her diabetes, the care plan offers her opportunity to outline her own concerns which relate mostly to her pain when she tries to come down stairs.

Wendy's medical team design a tailored care plan with visits to a diabetes educator to ensure her diabetes is looked after, a dietitian to help optimise her diet to manage her diabetes and bone health and a physiotherapist to educate Wendy how to strengthen her legs to improve the pain which was her priority.

The care plan and the subsequent review sessions also allows Wendy's GP the opportunity to organise some preventive screening tests for her to help reduce risks of heart attack, stroke or cancer. This way Wendy's health and well-being are looked after holistically.

If you think you might be eligible for a care plan, or would like to know more, speak to your doctor today.

I have made the appointment, what should I prepare?

If you have a list of your current medications or a pill pack, have this available.

If you have seen any specialists, knowing who they are can be of help

If you have seen a particular Allied Health Practitioner in the past, or would like to see someone specific, knowing who they are can help.

Ask yourself:

“what rating would I give my overall health out of 10?”

“what changes would help me improve this score in the next 12 months?”