

Enrolling with a General Practice

General practice provides comprehensive primary, community-based, and continuing patient-centred health care to patients enrolled with them and others who consult. General practice services include the diagnosis, management and treatment of health conditions, continuity of health care throughout the lifespan, health promotion, prevention, screening, and referral to hospital and specialists.

Most general practice providers are affiliated to a PHO. The fund-holding role of PHOs allows an extended range of services to be provided across the collective of providers within a PHO.

Enrolling with a Primary Health Organisation (PHO)

What is a PHO?

Primary Health Organisations are the local structures for delivering and co-ordinating primary health care services. PHOs bring together doctors, nurses and other health professionals (such as Maori health workers, health promoters, dietitians, pharmacists, physiotherapists, mental health workers and midwives) in the community to serve the needs of their enrolled populations.

PHOs receive a set amount of funding from the government to ensure the provision of a range of health services, including visits to the doctor. Funding is based on the people enrolled with the PHO and their characteristics (e.g. age, gender, and ethnicity). Funding also pays for services that help people stay healthy and services that reach out to groups in the community who are missing out on health services or who have poor health.

Benefits of Enrolling

Enrolling is free and voluntary. If you choose not to enrol you can still receive health services from a chosen GP / general practice / provider of First Level primary health care services. Advantages of enrolling are that your visits to the doctor will be cheaper and you will have direct access to a range of services linked to the PHO.

How do I enrol?

To enrol, you need to complete an Enrolment Form at the general practice of your choice. Parents can enrol children under 16 years of age, but children over 16 years need to sign their own form.

Q & A

What happens if I go to another General Practice?

You can go to another general practice or change to a new general practice at any time. If you are enrolled in a PHO through one general practice and visit another practice as a casual patient you will pay a higher fee for that visit. So if you have more than one general practice you should consider enrolling with the practice you visit most often.

What happens if the general practice changes to a new PHO?

If the general practice changes to a new PHO the practice will make this information available to you.

What happens if I am enrolled in a general practice but don't see them very often?

If you have not received services from your general practice in a 3 year period it is likely that the practice will contact you and ask if you wish to remain with the practice. If you are not able to be contacted or do not respond your name will be taken off the Practice and PHO Enrolment Registers. You can re-enrol with the same general practice or another general practice and the affiliated PHO at a later time.

How do I know if I'm eligible for publicly funded health and disability services?

Talk to the practice staff, call 0800 855 151, or visit http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh_nsf/indexmh/eligibility-eligibilitydirectionplain and work through the Guide to Eligibility Criteria.

Health Information Privacy Statement

I understand the following:

Access to my health information

I have the right to access (and have corrected) my health information under Rules 6 and 7 of the Health Information Privacy Code 1994.

Visiting another GP

If I visit another GP who is not my regular doctor I will be asked for permission to share information from the visit with my regular doctor or practice.

If I have a High User Health Card or Community Services Card and I visit another GP who is not my regular doctor, he/she can make a claim for a subsidy, and the practice I am enrolled in will be informed of the date of that visit. The name of the practice I visited and the reason(s) for the visit will not be disclosed unless I give my consent.

Patient Enrolment Information

The information I have provided on the Practice Enrolment Form will be:

- held by the practice
- used by the Ministry of Health to give me a National Health Index (NHI) number, or update any changes
- sent to the PHO and Ministry of Health to obtain subsidised funding on my behalf
- used to determine eligibility to receive publicly-funded services. Information may be compared with other government agencies but only when permitted under the Privacy Act.

Health Information

Members of my health team may:

- add to my health record during any services provided to me and use that information to provide appropriate care
- share relevant health information to other health professionals who are directly involved in my care

Audit

In the case of financial audits, my health information may be reviewed by an auditor for checking a financial claim made by the practice, but only according to the terms and conditions of section 22G of the Health Act (or any subsequent applicable Act). I may be contacted by the auditor to check that services have been received. If the audit involves checking on health matters, an appropriately qualified health care practitioner will view the health records.

Health Programmes

Health data relevant to a programme in which I am enrolled (e.g. Breast Screening, Immunisation, Diabetes) may be sent to the PHO or the external health agency managing this programme.

Other Uses of Health Information

Health information *which will not include my name but may include my National Health Index Identifier (NHI)* may be used by health agencies such as the District Health Board, Ministry of Health or PHO for the following purposes, as long as it is not used or published in a way that can identify me:

- health service planning and reporting
- monitoring service quality
- payment

Research

My health information may be used for health research, but only if this has been approved by an Ethics Committee and will not be used or published in a way that can identify me.

Except as listed above, I understand that details about my health status or the services I have received will remain confidential within the medical practice unless I give specific consent for this information to be communicated.