



Reciprocal Health Care Agreements

Visitors that are residents of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden, Slovenia, Norway, Finland, Italy, Malta, Belgium, the Republic of Ireland and New Zealand may be eligible for immediately necessary medical treatment while they are in Australia, comprising:

- Public hospital care (as public patients);
- Medicare benefits for out of hospital services; and
- Drugs under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

Residents of Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden, Slovenia, Norway, Finland, Italy, Malta and Belgium are:

- Eligible for free treatment in an Australian public hospital by showing passport identification and evidence of a valid visa. Note: if traveling on an electronic visa, evidence may be a letter or copy of the visa approval email from the Department of Immigration (and not stamped in passport).
- Eligible to access standard Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) rebates for private general practitioner (GP) consultations.
- Eligible for a Medicare card on entry to Australia or can claim MBS rebates from a Medicare office after paying the private GP fee.

Residents of the Republic of Ireland and New Zealand are:

- Eligible for free treatment in an Australian public hospital by showing passport identification and evidence of valid visa if traveling on an electronic visa. Note: if traveling on an electronic visa, evidence may

be a letter or copy of the visa approval email from the Department of Immigration.

- Eligible to access standard Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) rebates for private general practitioner (GP) consultations.
- Not required to enrol in Medicare (and do not receive a Medicare card).

Exceptions

- Visitors from the Republic of Ireland and New Zealand are entitled to public hospital care and PBS drugs, and should present their passports before treatment as they are not issued with Medicare cards.
- Visitors from Italy and Malta are covered for a period of six months from date of entry to Australia only.
- The RHC Agreements do not cover treatment as a private patient in a public or private hospital.
- People visiting Australia for the purpose of receiving treatment are not covered.
- Visitors and temporary residents in Australia not covered by the RHCA are not eligible for Medicare and should therefore have adequate private health insurance.

How to register for Medicare under the RHCA

Residents of Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden, Slovenia, Norway, Finland, Italy, Malta and Belgium can apply to Medicare Australia for a Medicare Card by presenting:

- Passport identification; and

Whilst all care has been taken in preparing this document, this information is a guide only and subject to change without notice.

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- Evidence of a valid visa

The Medicare card will state "RECIPROCAL HEALTH CARE".

How to bill a patient covered under the RHCA

- If a patient holds a valid Medicare card they may be privately or bulk billed as per a usual Australian citizen patient. If the patient has registered his or her bank account details with Medicare, the MBS rebate may be paid directly to their nominated bank account via Medicare Online (at participating practices).
- If a patient does not hold a Medicare card, but is eligible for the RHCA they may be charged a private fee and can then claim the MBS rebate from a Medicare office.

More information

Medicare Benefits Schedule - Note G3.4

<http://www9.health.gov.au/mbs/fullDisplay.cfm?type=note&q=G3.4&qt=noteID&criteria=reciprocal>

Department of Human Services

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/reciprocal-health-care-agreements>

Contact

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