

# Healthcare Identifiers Service (HI Service)

The Healthcare Identifiers Service (HI Service) is a national system that uses unique numbers (healthcare identifiers) to match healthcare providers to patients.

Healthcare identifiers help reduce the potential for mix ups with healthcare-related information and provide confidence that the correct information is being linked to the correct individual.

By supporting secure electronic communications, healthcare identifiers are the foundation for other government initiatives, such as [My Health Record](#).

## Types of healthcare identifiers

There are three types of healthcare identifiers, which use unique 16 digit numbers to identify individual patients receiving healthcare, individual healthcare providers and healthcare provider organisations.

**Individual Healthcare Identifier (IHI)** is used to identify individual patients receiving healthcare, including every person enrolled in Medicare or registered with the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

**Healthcare Provider Identifier - Individual (HPI-I)** is used to identify individual healthcare providers, such as general practitioners, allied health professionals, specialists, nurses, dentists and pharmacists.

**Healthcare Provider Identifier - Organisation (HPI-O)** is used to identify the healthcare provider organisations where healthcare is provided, such as hospitals, medical practices, pathology or radiology laboratories and pharmacies.

## The Healthcare Provider Directory

The HI Service also includes the Healthcare Provider Directory, which is a consent-based directory of individual healthcare providers and healthcare provider organisations registered in the HI Service.

The Healthcare Provider Directory is designed to help facilitate communication by enabling healthcare providers to quickly find the contact, location and service details of other registered healthcare providers and organisations.

## Who operates the HI Service?

The HI Service is operated by Services Australia and its responsibilities include:

- processing registrations for healthcare provider organisations and individual healthcare providers not registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Agency (AHPRA)
- disclosing individual healthcare identifiers to healthcare providers in line with legislative safeguards
- operating and maintaining the HI Service IT systems, including the Healthcare Provider Directory
- answering general enquiries from the public and healthcare providers about the HI Service
- providing helpdesk services to HI Service users
- ensuring accuracy and security of the national database.

## Electronically accessing the HI Service

To access the HI Service electronically, individual healthcare providers and healthcare provider organisations require an appropriate Services Australia Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) certificate.

If you already have a PKI Individual Certificate or your organisation has a PKI Site Certificate, you can request to have the existing certificates linked to the HI Service record in the HI Service.

If you or your organisation don't have an existing PKI certificate, you can apply for one when registering in the HI Service or request one later by submitting the required form from the [PKI page](#) on the Services Australia website.

## Accessing healthcare identifiers of patients

To access the individual healthcare identifiers of patients, individual healthcare providers and healthcare provider organisations need to register in the HI Service and be assigned a healthcare identifier.

## More information about the HI Service

To find out more about the [Healthcare Identifiers Service](#), and [how to apply](#) for the different identifiers, visit the [Services Australia](#) website, call 1300 361 457 or email [healthcareidentifiers@servicesaustralia.gov.au](mailto:healthcareidentifiers@servicesaustralia.gov.au)

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