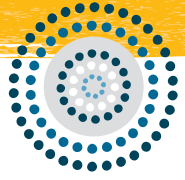


## Finding a GP

### What young people need to know about finding a GP



Finding a local doctor (GP) is an important part of your transition planning. This fact sheet will help you understand what to look for and why.

#### You and your general practitioner

- Everyone should have a local doctor (also called a general practitioner or GP).
- Your GP will take over the role of your paediatrician if you had one.
- Find a GP who you feel comfortable with. Someone you can trust and can talk to easily about your health.
- Finding your own GP means you don't have to keep explaining your health and life issues every time to a new person.
- You are the expert on you and your health and your GP is your partner in providing expert medical advice. They will co-ordinate your care between various medical specialities and will bring together your management plan with you at the centre of it.
- Your GP is usually the first health professional to contact if you start to feel unwell.
- A GP can support your mental and physical health and will work together with other health professionals if this is needed for you.
- Your GP will refer you to specialists and other health professionals and without the GP referral there is no Medicare rebate.
- GPs are more available than specialists and they deal with all health issues.

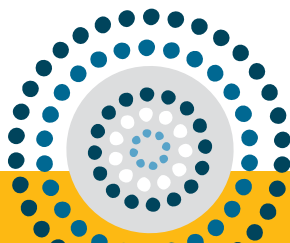
#### Finding a GP

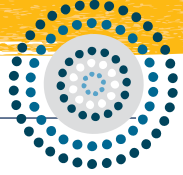
- Try asking family and friends who live near you if they can recommend a GP or contact Trapeze or an ACI Transition Coordinator.
- Try these websites to find a GP or Aboriginal Medical Service or Aboriginal Community Controlled Health service in your area:
  - [www.healthdirect.gov.au](http://www.healthdirect.gov.au)
  - [www.healthengine.com.au](http://www.healthengine.com.au)
  - [www.ahmrc.org.au](http://www.ahmrc.org.au).
- If you change GPs, ask to transfer your medical records to your new GP to ensure information remains up to date

#### Attending GP appointments

- Most GP appointments are between 5–15 minutes long. If you think you will need more time, ask the receptionist to book you in for a long appointment.
- It is important that you arrive on time for your appointment, so allow plenty of time to get there.
- Bring your medicare card with you
- It is important to call and cancel your appointment if you can't make it. Be sure to reschedule.
- Ask if the practice has disability access.
- Ask if there is a quiet room you could use or sit in if needed.

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## Cost of seeing a GP

- The cost of seeing a GP varies.
- Some GPs 'bulk bill' which means there is no out-of-pocket cost to you.
- Other GPs may bill you, which means you have to pay the difference between their fee and what Medicare covers.
- It is a good idea to ask the receptionist if the GP will 'bulk bill', how much a standard appointment will cost and how much you will get back from Medicare.
- Don't be afraid to ask if the GP can bulk bill you, especially if you have a Health Care Card.

## Questions to ask yourself about your GP

- Do they understand my condition or know how to get help for me?
- Do I trust them to give me an honest answer?
- Do they support me to get other professional help, e.g. a second opinion if I want it?
- Can I talk to my GP about embarrassing or difficult health topics?
- Is my GP listening to me?
- Does my GP encourage and support me to take control of my health care?
- Do I feel comfortable with my GP? Do they explain my choices in a way I understand?
- Does my GP take me seriously? Do they keep my personal information private?

Check out these short videos about finding a GP and referrals.



For more information, see the fact sheet 'Medicare and paying for health services'.

**GET THE FACTS**



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Next review 2026.

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