

We can help you to feel better

Everyone needs a GP



You need the best possible care and we can work with your General Practitioner (GP) to achieve this.

What is a GP?

A general practitioner (GP) is a doctor who looks after a consumer's health in the community. A GP can help you with your physical, mental and emotional health. GPs can help you stay healthy through check-ups, health screening, and early treatment.

Benefits of having a regular GP

You may feel more comfortable talking to a GP you already know and can relate to easily. Having a 'regular' GP allows them to get to know your medical history, your family's medical history, and helps with achieving an overall view of your health.

Many people don't realise that good physical health is linked with positive mood, lower levels of stress, depression and anxiety, being able to concentrate better and feeling calm and relaxed. A regular GP can help you take care of your mind and body.

If you are receiving mental health services, your mental health team and GP will be able to work together in a shared care partnership to make sure that you receive the best care for your mind and body.

Confidentiality

Information you provide to your GP remains confidential — that is, the GP will not pass on the information unless you agree.

There are exceptions to this — if you are being referred to a specialist or another health service — your GP may provide information as part of the referral.

If your GP believes you are at risk of harming yourself or others, they may disclose information in order to minimise harm. If the patient is a child, a GP is legally required to do this.

Your GP may ask for your consent to release information to another service provider. Your medical records will be kept at the GP's office and the GP's staff are also required to not discuss any information about you or any other patient.

What about payment?

Private billing

Some GPs charge a fee for services to patients. Most of the cost of the fee can be claimed back from Medicare. GPs may discount their fee for patients experiencing financial hardship — if this is true for you, explain your situation when you book the appointment.

Bulk billing

Some GPs bulk bill services to patients, which means they claim the fee from Medicare. They will ask you to sign a Medicare form before you leave the surgery.



Health Care Cards

Many GPs will bulk bill patients on Health Care Cards, Veterans Cards or on a pension. If you are in doubt, ask the surgery when you book the appointment. Make sure that you bring your Medicare Card and any Health Care Cards with you to the appointment. To apply for a Medicare Card telephone 13 20 11.

What can a GP help me with?

GPs can help you with a variety of problems including:

- physical injuries and mental health
- chronic illnesses like diabetes and asthma
- health check-ups and stress
- viral illnesses — head colds, flu etc
- illness prevention including cervical screening and prostate checks
- emotional issues including depression and anxiety
- sleep problems
- immunisations
- childhood illnesses, parenting issues, and much more!

Some GPs specialise in areas of health such as women's health and obstetrics, children's health, or mental health. Your GP can also provide referrals to specialist services, allied health services and hospital services, as you need it.

How can I find a GP?

Talk to your mental health worker or ask your family, friends or neighbours to recommend a GP. GPs in your local area can also be found through:

- the Yellow Pages under Medical Practitioners
- <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/find-a-professional> – for locating GPs with a particular interest in mental health
- <https://healthengine.com.au/find/gp/Adelaide/> which allows you to search by suburb, book appointments and identifies bulk billing practices.

We would recommend registering with a general practice (doctor's surgery) with the plan of having a consistent GP who you can see regularly to manage all your healthcare needs.



Let's work together towards
a **healthy mind and body.**

For more information

SA Health
Mental Health Directorate
Office of the Chief Psychiatrist
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au

Public-I1-A1



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