



Frequently asked questions about My Health Record

This document helps you to answer your patients' questions more broadly about My Health Record, including the benefits, privacy and security of the system.

Our website contains a more extensive list of frequently asked questions about My Health Record and we encourage you to check it for regular updates: MyHealthRecord.gov.au/faqs.

What is My Health Record?

My Health Record is an online summary of your key health information.

Once it's set up, you don't need to do anything. Your health information can be viewed securely online, from anywhere, at any time – even if you move or travel interstate. You can access your health information from any computer or device that's connected to the internet.

You don't need to be sick to benefit from having a My Health Record. It's a convenient way to record and track your health information over time.

What is included in your My Health Record?

My Health Record brings together health information from you, your healthcare providers and Medicare.

Healthcare providers can add clinical documents about your health to your record. This includes:

- ◆ an overview of your health uploaded by your doctor, called a Shared Health Summary. This is a useful reference for new doctors or other healthcare providers that you visit
- ◆ hospital discharge summaries
- ◆ reports from test and scans, like blood tests
- ◆ medications that your doctor has prescribed to you
- ◆ referral letters from your doctor(s)

Medicare data can be added to your record. This includes:

- ◆ Medicare and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) information stored by the Department of Human Services
- ◆ Medicare and Repatriation Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits (RPBS) information stored by the Department of Veterans' Affairs
- ◆ organ donation decisions
- ◆ immunisations that are included in the Australian Immunisation Register

You, or someone authorised to represent you, can share additional information in your record that may be important for your healthcare providers to know about you. This includes:

- ◆ contact numbers and emergency contact details
- ◆ current medications
- ◆ allergy information and any previous adverse reactions
- ◆ Indigenous status
- ◆ Veterans' or Australian Defence Force status
- ◆ your Advance Care Plan or contact details of your custodian

What are the benefits of My Health Record?

Better connected care

As more people use the My Health Record system, Australia's national health system will become better connected. The result is safer, faster and more efficient care for you and your family.

Access to your key health information in an emergency

In a medical emergency, healthcare providers connected to the My Health Record system can see your health information such as allergies, medicines and immunisations. This helps them to provide you with the best possible treatment and care.

A convenient snapshot of your health

When your healthcare provider uses your My Health Record, it means you don't need to remember and repeat your medical story, such as your prescriptions or tests you've had. It also helps you keep track of your children's health, immunisations and any medical tests.



Children and My Health Record

How do I decide whether to register my newborn for My Health Record, or to opt out?

You can choose whether to register your newborn for My Health Record as part of the Newborn Child Declaration form in your 'Parent Pack' that you receive from your hospital or midwife.

How do I opt out my child?

If you have parental responsibility for children under the age of 18, and they are listed on your Medicare card, you can opt out of My Health Record on their behalf online. Find out more at MyHealthRecord.gov.au.

Why do I already have a My Health Record? I don't remember signing up for one

Over six million Australians currently have a My Health Record. Most people have registered themselves or their children for a My Health Record in one of the following ways:

- ◆ Via a myGov account
- ◆ Medicare enrolment form (for a newborn)
- ◆ At a Medicare Service Centre
- ◆ By calling the My Health Record Help line
- ◆ They may have been a resident in the opt-out participation trial areas in 2016.

Find out more about why you may already have a record at MyHealthRecord.gov.au.

Cancelling your My Health Record

How can I cancel a My Health Record?

If you already have a My Health Record, and decide you don't want one anymore, you can cancel it at any time. Visit MyHealthRecord.gov.au for instructions.

You can also contact the Help line on 1800 723 471 for assistance to cancel a record. Please check wait times at MyHealthRecord.gov.au before you call us.

Opting out of My Health Record

Why do I need to provide my personal details to opt out?

Basic demographic information is needed to ensure the system can identify you, and record your choice to opt out. This information is not used for any other purpose.

Will I lose access to Medicare services if I opt out?

If you are eligible to get Medicare services, you will continue to get these services even if you decide to opt out.

Changes to My Health Record legislation to increase privacy provisions

On 31 July 2018, the government announced changes to strengthen privacy provisions under the My Health Records Act 2012:

Access: It will be required by law for a government department or agency to present a court order to gain access to a person's My Health Record. To note, no record has ever been released in the past, and no government agency other than the System Operator has access to the system.

Permanent deletion of a record: If someone wishes to cancel their My Health Record they will be able to do so permanently, with their record deleted from the system.



Privacy and security

Who can access my private health information?

Only healthcare provider organisations involved in your care, who are registered with the My Health Record System Operator, are allowed by law to access your My Health Record.

This may include GPs, pharmacies, pathology labs, hospitals, specialists and allied health professionals. These organisations need to use conformant clinical software containing an authenticated digital certificate to access the My Health Record system.

If you wish, you can allow others, such as a partner, child, parent or carer, to access your record by making them a nominated representative.

The Australia Digital Health Agency has not and will not release any documents without a court/coronal or similar order. No documents have been released in the last six years and none will be released in the future without a court order/coronal or similar order. Additionally, no other government agencies have direct access to the My Health Record system, other than the System Operator.

The only healthcare providers authorised to access a healthcare recipient's information in a My Health Record are those who are providing healthcare to the individual. Every time a healthcare provider accesses a My Health Record, a log is automatically created. This allows an individual to monitor every access to their My Health Record, with complete transparency.

If you have concerns about who has accessed your My Health Record, contact us immediately on 1800 723 471.

How do healthcare providers get access to the My Health Record system?

For a healthcare provider such as a doctor or pharmacist to gain access to the My Health Record system they must:

- ◆ work for an organisation which is registered with the My Health Record System Operator, and
- ◆ use clinical software and have proper security identification.

If the healthcare provider downloads a patient's information, this continues to be subject to Australian privacy, security and jurisdictional laws.

Administration staff within your doctor's office must be authorised by the medical practice to access the My Health Record system for the purposes of providing healthcare to you.

In the current health system, paper and digital records about you may be held in various health locations.

The addition of My Health Record to your doctor's practice and process of care does not change the privacy and confidentiality obligations that practice staff are already subject to under Australian law.

Is My Health Record safe and secure?

The My Health Record system meets the strictest cyber security standards. It has robust multi-tiered security controls to protect the system from malicious attack.

The system has been built and tested to Australian Government standards to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information within an individual's My Health Record.

The Australian Digital Health Agency actively monitors and responds to threats and risks within the cyber security environment and uses the internationally recognised management framework, Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL).

All access and use of the My Health Record system is monitored by the Australian Digital Health Agency Cyber Security Centre.

If an individual's My Health Record is deliberately accessed without authorisation, criminal penalties may apply. These may include up to two years in jail and up to \$126,000 in fines.

Will my records be available on the open internet? (For example, via Google search)

My Health Record cannot be accessed on the open internet. Healthcare provider organisations must be authorised to connect to the system and use conformant clinical software.



Past and sensitive clinical information

Will my past medical history be added into my record?

Your previous medical history such as older tests and medical reports will not be available within your new My Health Record.

Will my doctor be able to find out about past or current medical issues that I consider sensitive?

It's your choice what information is in your My Health Record, and who you share it with.

You can advise your doctor not to upload any information about sensitive clinical conditions. You can also choose to remove or restrict access to clinical documents by setting privacy controls.

You can place a Record Access Code on your record. You will need to provide a healthcare provider organisation with the code for them to access your record.

You can place a Limited Document Access Code to restrict access to specific documents relating to visits to healthcare providers, or medicines you are taking. You will need to provide the code for the healthcare provider organisation to access your restricted documents.

I've seen a new tick box on pathology reports that says "Do not send to My Health Record". Are records uploaded by default?

The 'Do not send to My Health Record' tick box on the new pathology form is an opportunity for you and your GP to discuss if you would like your results uploaded to your record (if you have one) before you take the test.

You can also instruct your doctor or the pathology or diagnostic imaging service not to upload the report.

In addition, you can set document access controls within your My Health Record, and remove pathology and diagnostic imaging reports from your record.

In some circumstances, certain pathology reports may not appear in your My Health Record, even if you have not withdrawn consent for upload, in accordance with legislation. For example, reports may not be uploaded on a person's AIDS or HIV status if there are disclosure restrictions set by state or territory legislation.

Who can access a My Health Record?

Will the police, Centrelink and ATO have access to my medical records?

As System Operator of the My Health Record system, the Australian Digital Health Agency takes its role as custodian of Australian's health information seriously. Protecting the integrity of the My Health Record system and maintaining public confidence and trust in the system is paramount.

The Agency considers any formal request for access on a case by case basis. However, the Agency's operating policy is to release information only where legally compelled to do so, such as by court order/coronal or similar order.

Can insurance companies and other third parties access my data?

The Australian Government has developed a framework to guide the secondary use of My Health Record system data for research, policy and planning purposes.

Insurance is not healthcare and therefore insurance agencies are explicitly not permitted access to My Health Record system data for secondary use.

Only authorised employees of healthcare provider organisations who are providing care to a patient are permitted to access My Health Record data.

