

FACT SHEET

HOW TO GET MY OWN MEDICARE CARD FROM THE AGE OF 15

The youth friendly 'road map' and fact sheet explain how young people can get their own Medicare card under different circumstances. These resources are for health services or services working with young people.

Generally, young people can get their own Medicare card by visiting a Medicare office or call Medicare on 13 20 11. This fact sheet and road map explain why young people may need their own Medicare card, and which option and pathway to take for getting their own Medicare card that will suit their needs under different circumstances.



What is a Medicare card?

Ever wonder what your Medicare card is actually for? When you show healthcare providers your Medicare card, you can receive free or cheaper health services from people such as doctors, specialists and optometrists.

Places you can use your Medicare card include bulk billing doctors, public hospitals and even the pharmacy or chemist where you buy your medicine. You can get cheaper medicine using your Medicare card if your prescriptions are covered by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (which includes most common medicines that your doctor recommends).

Why do I need my own Medicare card?

You can get your own Medicare card from the age of 15. You can still choose to use your family's Medicare card to see a doctor until you feel you

want to become independent. However, there are times you may need your own Medicare card or a duplicate Medicare card to see a doctor, for example if you are at boarding school, travelling for sport or living away from home under exceptional circumstances or for any other reason.

To get your own Medicare card, visit a Medicare office. For more information go to;

- * www.health.nsw.gov.au and search for 'How to get my own Medicare Card' or
- * call Medicare on 13 20 11 or
- * call Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Access Line 1800 556 955 or
- * talk to your healthcare provider.

Can I get a card if I'm under 15?

In special situations, some people can get their own card if they are under 15. For more information, please call Medicare on 13 20 11 or talk to your healthcare provider about this.

How do I apply for my own Medicare Card?

Generally, you can apply for your Medicare card through a Medicare Office but this will depend on what is happening in your life at the time.

To get your own Medicare card, visit a Medicare office or call Medicare on 13 20 11. If you need more information before contacting Medicare, read the How to get my own Medicare card road map to find out the different pathways for getting your own Medicare card.

Process for getting your own Medicare card

At a Medicare Office

If you are applying for a Medicare card through a Medicare Office, you need to fill out the form called '[Application to copy or transfer from one Medicare card to another](#)'. Also, you should take two forms of identification with you (eg. a birth certificate, student card, healthcare card, driver's licence or passport).

You can also choose to stay on your parent's card and have a copy made to keep with you. You don't need identification to do this. This is called the '[duplicate Medicare card](#)'. You only need to ask your parents or carers to call or visit Medicare to get you your '[duplicate Medicare card](#)'.

By post

You can download the [form](#) from the [Human Services website](#) but you need your identifying [documents](#) certified (ask an adult to help you with this) and attached to your form. Once you have done this, post all the information on (forms and certified identifying documents) to:

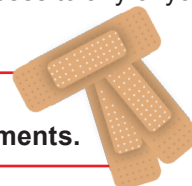
Medicare
GPO Box 9822
In your capital city

Does staying on my parents' Medicare card mean they can see when I have visited a doctor or other health services?

If your name is on your parents' Medicare card or you have a '[duplicate Medicare card](#)', your parents will usually have access to your Medicare records (meaning they can see when you've visited a doctor or other health services). If you are 14 or older, Medicare will not give information about your medical treatment to your parents without your consent, but your parents will still be able to see that you have visited a doctor. This is because the information will be listed if your parents apply for a [Medicare Tax Benefit Statement](#).

If you have your own Medicare card (not a duplicate), then your parents will not have access to any of your Medicare records.

Important note:
never post your original documents.



Using the Medicare card for bulk billing

Having a Medicare card means that you can be bulk billed by a doctor. Bulk billing just means the cost of seeing the doctor is paid for by the government. Many doctors will bulk bill young people under 16 as well as healthcare cardholders and students.

Before you make an appointment with your doctor, ask if they bulk bill (just ask at the front counter or when you are on the phone). If they don't, ask how much it will cost and how you can get some of this money back from Medicare.

If you are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, you are entitled to a free check-up once a year.



References

1. Medicare services, Department of Human Services, viewed 30 September 2015. <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/medicare-services>.
2. Young people becoming independent, Department of Human Services, viewed 30 September 2015. <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/young-people-becoming-independent>.
3. Medicare card, Department of Human Services, viewed 30 September 2015 (under 'existing customer'- duplicate Medicare card, under 'first steps' – Get your own Medicare card at age 15). <http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/medicare-card>
4. Set yourself Free! Get your own Medicare Card from the Age of 15, NSW Centre for the Advancement of Adolescent Health, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, Yfoundations (2011).

