



## Health Entitlement

# Repatriation Health Card - For Specific Conditions (White)

### Overview

This Factsheet describes the health care you can get access to with your Repatriation Health Card – For Specific Conditions (*White Card*).



### Who can obtain a White Card?

A White Card is issued to Australian veterans or mariners under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) with:

- an accepted war or service-caused injury or disease
- malignant cancer (neoplasia) whether war-caused or not
- pulmonary tuberculosis whether war-caused or not
- post-traumatic stress disorder whether war-caused or not
- anxiety and/or depression whether war-caused or not.

A White Card is also issued to ex-service personnel who are eligible for treatment under agreements between the Australian Government and New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and the United Kingdom for disabilities accepted as war-caused by their country of origin.

*Note:* Services available to these veterans may be different from those available to Australian veterans. Please refer to other Factsheets for specific information on the services available.

A White Card may be issued to former members of the Australian Defence Force, current part-time Reservists, cadets and, in limited circumstances, to full-time members under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) who have a medical condition accepted as service related under the MRCA.

In certain circumstances, members and former members with warlike or non-warlike service after 1 July 2004 may also be provided with a White Card under the VEA for the treatment of malignant neoplasia, pulmonary tuberculosis, post-traumatic stress disorder or anxiety and/or depression, irrespective of whether those conditions are war-caused or not.

See Factsheet MRC22: *Treatment*.

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## When do I use my White Card?

For treatment of specific conditions as described above, you should present your White Card whenever you visit:

- your doctor, medical specialist, dentist, pharmacist, dental prosthetist or optometrist or any after-hours medical service; *or*
- other health care providers to whom you are referred for treatment; *or*
- a hospital.

## Will I be charged for health care services?

You should not be charged for any treatment received for your *specific conditions* as long as your health care provider agrees to treat you under the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) arrangements. If you are billed, *do not pay the account* and advise DVA immediately. DVA may not be able to reimburse the cost of the treatment.

You may be required to make a contribution towards the cost of pharmaceutical items, nursing home care, Veterans' Home Care (VHC) services and some dental services. There may be an extra fee, called the gap fee, charged for higher cost brands of some pharmaceutical items.

## What health care services can I have access to?

For your *specific conditions* **only**, your White Card may allow you access to some of the following services if appropriate:

- audiology
- acupuncture performed by a medical practitioner
- chiropractic services
- community nursing
- convalescent care
- dental services
- diabetic educator services
- dietetic services
- emergency short-term home relief
- hearing services
- medical consultations and procedures listed on the MBS\*
- medical specialist services listed on the MBS\*
- medical services and surgical procedures listed on the MBS\* in public and DVA contracted private hospitals and contracted day surgery facilities
- medication reviews
- nursing home care
- occupational therapy
- optometrical consultations
- orthoptics
- osteopathic services
- palliative care
- pathology services
- pharmaceutical items prescribed by your doctor
- physiotherapy
- podiatry and medical grade footwear
- psychology, including hypnotherapy
- rehabilitation aids and appliances
- respite care
- social work
- speech pathology
- transport, including ambulance and travel assistance to obtain health care

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- Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service.
  - Veterans' Home Care – if you are a veteran of the Australian Defence Forces, assessment for:
  - domestic assistance
  - personal care
  - home and garden maintenance (safety related)
- respite care
- delivered meals – organised through Home and Community Care (HACC)
- community transport - organised through Home and Community Care (HACC)
- X-rays, nuclear medicine imaging, ultrasound and computerised tomography.

More detailed information on these services is available through other factsheets listed below.

\*Generally the only medical services available are those listed on the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS), but exceptions can be made in special circumstances.

### **Are there restrictions?**

There are limits that apply to some types of services available. For example, medical services are subject to the requirements of the Medicare Benefits Schedule. Some treatment requires prior financial authorisation from DVA. Commonwealth and Allied veterans may receive respite care (but not other VHC services) where it relates to their accepted disabilities.

### **Do I have to get approval before receiving treatment?**

Your doctor will contact DVA for approval if you need:

- admission to public and private hospitals and day surgery facilities
- ambulance transport (in some states) except in an emergency
- any health care provided overseas
- any item or service that is in excess of DVA limits
- medical services not listed on the Medicare Benefits Schedule
- medical grade footwear
- orthoptic services
- respite care
- some pharmaceutical items
- some rehabilitation appliances and surgical aids
- a special car with driver, where your doctor certifies that it is medically essential
- All dental treatment requires prior approval. Your dentist is required to contact DVA prior to commencing any treatment.

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## Are there other services I can access?

### **Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS)**

A range of counselling services are available to veterans and their families from VVCS. For more information please refer to Factsheet VCS 01.

### ***Health Promotion Services – HomeFront:***

You can have a free home assessment under the HomeFront falls and accident prevention program which considers the safety needs of the veteran household. DVA makes a financial contribution in the form of a subsidy towards the cost of recommended aids and minor home modifications. The recommended aids and appliances are generally low-cost items such as handrails or the provision of non-slip strips on steps. The cost of recommended aids and minor home modifications over and above the subsidy is to be met by you. This service is available each calendar year. Prior approval is not required. To arrange an assessment, ring 1800 801 945 and ask for HomeFront.

### ***Veterans' Home Maintenance Line:***

The Veterans' Home Maintenance Line (VHML) is a toll-free telephone service that provides advice on general property maintenance matters and referral to local reliable and efficient tradespeople. The tradespeople have appropriate qualifications, and both professional indemnity and public liability insurance cover. VHML can also arrange home inspections to identify current or possible future maintenance problems.

The VHML advice is free but you will need to pay for work done by tradespeople, including callout fees. You can receive an unlimited number of services from the VHML.

You can access this service by telephoning 1800 801 945 and ask for home maintenance.

*Note:* This is a home maintenance and emergency only. It cannot give financial or legal advice, or answer questions about pensions or other Veterans' Affairs matters. If you have questions about pensions or other matters, please ring your local Veterans' Affairs office on the numbers listed at the end of this factsheet.

## Can I use my White Card anywhere in Australia and overseas?

You can use your White Card anywhere in Australia, but *not* overseas.

Please contact your DVA office for information about arrangements for treatment overseas *before* you travel.

If you need treatment while travelling within Australia, you may check with the local health provider if they accept DVA white card. The DVA office may also be able to assist you with details of health providers who accept the white card.

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## Can I still use Medicare?

You may choose to be treated under either DVA or Medicare arrangements for your *specific conditions*. If you do choose to be treated under Medicare you may still receive, at DVA's expense, additional health care services that are not covered by Medicare.

*Note:* These health care services must be arranged in accordance with DVA requirements. DVA *will not* pay the difference between the Medicare refund and the cost of the treatment.

## Can I choose to be treated at my own expense?

You can choose to be treated at your own expense or through your own private health insurance. However, if you take this option, DVA is unable to reimburse you for private expenses, and is unable to pay the gap between the cost of the services and any rebate payable by your private health fund or Medicare.

## When does my White Card expire?

The expiry date is shown on the front of your White Card. You will receive a replacement White Card about one month before the expiry date. If you don't receive your replacement card ring your nearest DVA State office.

If your level of eligibility changes before the expiry date DVA will notify you and ask you to return the card.

If you change your address please contact your nearest DVA State office so your replacement card is sent to the correct address.

## What do I do while waiting for the issue of my White Card or if my White Card is lost, stolen or damaged?

If your White Card is lost, stolen or damaged you must contact a DVA office immediately so that your card can be cancelled and a new White Card issued. It will take 4–6 weeks for a new card to be issued.

While you are waiting for your new White Card DVA will provide a letter of authority for this period should you need one, or your health provider may phone DVA for information of your eligibility and entitlements.

For further information, please refer to Factsheet:

- *HSV 64: Medical expenses privately incurred*

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## Other Factsheets

Other Factsheets related to this topic include:

*HCS 01: About Veterans' Home Care*

*HSV 13: Chiropractic Services*

*HSV 16: Community Nursing Services*

*HSV 17: Dental Services*

*HSV 29: Diabetic Educators*

*HSV 21: Dietetic Services*

*HSV 64: Medical Expenses privately incurred*

*HSV 66: Health Services for Veterans with Cancer*

*HSV 22: Hearing Services*

*MRC 22: Treatment*

*HSV 04: Home and Community Care*

*HAC 04: HomeFront*

*HAC 03: Veterans' Home Maintenance Line*

*HSV 80: Local Medical Officer Services*

*HSV 64: Medical Expenses Privately Incurred*

*HSV 23: Occupational Therapy Services*

*HSV 18: Optical Services and Supplies*

*HSV 14: Osteopathic Services*

*HSV 63: Other Commonwealth and Allied Veterans (excluding the United Kingdom)*

*HSV 02: Overview of the Repatriation Transport Scheme*

*HSV 19: Physiotherapy*

*HSV 20: Podiatry and Footwear*

*HSV 25: Psychology Services*

*HSV 107: Veterans' – Rehabilitation Appliances Program*

*HSV 65: Receiving Health Services While Overseas*

*HSV 26: Social Work Services*

*HSV 81: Specialist Services*

*HSV 27: Speech Pathology Services*

*HSV 62: Commonwealth and Allied Veterans*

*VCS 01: Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service*

*HSV 68: Eligibility for Treatment of Anxiety and Depression*

## More information

All DVA Factsheets are available from DVA offices, and on the DVA website at

[www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au).

You can phone DVA for the cost of a local call on:

133 254, or 1800 555 254, if you are outside a major city

Use a normal landline phone if you can. Mobile phone calls may cost you more

You can send an email to DVA at: [generalenquiries@dva.gov.au](mailto:generalenquiries@dva.gov.au)

You can get more help from any DVA office.