

Enrolling with General Practice

General practice provides comprehensive primary, community-based, and continuing patient-centred health care to patients enrolled with them and others who consult. General practice services include the diagnosis, management and treatment of health conditions, continuity of health care throughout the lifespan, health promotion, prevention, screening, and referral to hospital and specialists.

Most general practice providers are affiliated to a PHO. The fund-holding role of PHOs allows an extended range of services to be provided across the collective of providers within a PHO.

Enrolling with a Primary Health Organisation (PHO)

What is a PHO? Primary Health Organisations are the local structures for delivering and co-ordinating primary health care services. PHOs bring together doctors, nurses and other health professionals (such as Maori health workers, health promoters, dietitians, pharmacists, physiotherapists, mental health workers and midwives) in the community to serve the needs of their enrolled populations.

PHOs receive a set amount of funding from the government to ensure the provision of a range of health services, including visits to the doctor. Funding is based on the people enrolled with the PHO and their characteristics (eg. age, gender, ethnicity). Funding also pays for services that help people stay healthy and services that reach out to groups in the community who are missing out on health services or who have poor health.

Benefits of Enrolling. Enrolling is free and voluntary. If you choose not to enrol, you can still receive health services from a chosen GP/general practice/provider of First Level primary health care services. Advantages of enrolling are that your visits to the doctor will be cheaper and you will have direct access to a range of services linked to the PHO.

How do I enrol? To enrol, you need to complete an Enrolment form at the general practice of your choice. Parents can enrol children under 16 years of age, but children over 16 years need to sign their own form.

Q & A

What happens if I go to another General Practice? You can go to another general practice or change to a new general practice at any time. If you are enrolled in a PHO through one general practice and visit another as a casual patient, you will pay higher fee for that visit. So if you have more than one general practice you should consider enrolling with the practice you visit most often.

What happens if the general practice changes to a new PHO? If the general practice changes to a new PHO, the practice will make this information available to you.

What happens if I am enrolled in a general practice but don't see them very often? If you have not received services from your general practice in a 3 year period, it is likely that the practice will contact you and ask if you wish to remain with the practice. If you are not able to be contacted or do not respond, your name will be taken off the Practice and PHO Enrolment Registers. You can re-enrol with the same general practice or another general practice and the affiliated PHO at a later time.

How do I know if I'm eligible for publicly-funded health and disability services? Talk to the practice staff, call 0800 855 151, or visit <http://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/eligibility-publicly-funded-health-services> and work through the Guide to Eligibility Criteria.