

Reciprocal Health Care Agreements (RCHA)

Summary This Information Bulletin provides definitions and lists the countries that have Reciprocal Health Care Agreements with the Commonwealth of Australia.

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Distributed to Ministry of Health, Public Health System, Government Medical Officers, NSW Ambulance Service

Audience Administration, Fees/Revenue Officers, PLOs;Administrative, Directors of Finance, Revenue Managers, Billing Staff Administration;Admissions Staff, Revenue Staff, Finance Managers, Patient Administration System Managers/Developers

RECIPROCAL HEALTH CARE AGREEMENTS (RHCA)

PURPOSE

This Information Bulletin is to provide information to ensure that patients covered under a Reciprocal Health Care Agreement (RHCA) in Australia are treated and charged according to their country's Agreement.

Reciprocal Health Care Agreements have been negotiated between the Commonwealth of Australia and eleven countries. These Agreements govern access to free or subsidised health care for each country's residents when visiting Australia.

KEY INFORMATION

The links below give full access to the Services Australia's Medicare website

Countries that have Reciprocal Health Care Agreements with Australia		
Belgium	Finland	Republic of Ireland
Italy	Malta	The Netherlands
New Zealand	Norway	Slovenia
Sweden	United Kingdom – this includes England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man, Channel Islands (Jersey and Guernsey)	

Medically necessary treatment is treatment for ill-health or an injury which occurs while the visitor is in Australia and requires treatment before returning home.

Acute Dialysis Treatment is medically necessary and is treatment that is not required prior to the person's arrival in Australia/NSW.

Maintenance dialysis is pre-arranged before arrival in NSW. The patient can have 10 free treatments depending on the availability of resources at the treating facility. Not every country's Agreement allows this. Persons from Italy, Malta, Finland and Norway will have to pay for this service.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for free/subsidised treatment under a Reciprocal Health Care Agreements the person must:

- Meet the eligibility requirements of the Reciprocal Health Care Agreements with their country
- Seek medical treatment that is considered "medically necessary"
- Be classified as "reciprocal" (no charge public patient) as an admitted or non-admitted patient

Failure to meet the criteria on the Services Australia's Medicare website will mean that the patient is classified as a Medicare ineligible patient and fees for services will be raised as per NSW Health Policy Directive *Scale of Fees for Hospital and Other Services* ([PD2021_025](#)).