

If you have a condition that affects your health in any way, you may be eligible for a GP Management Plan (care plan)

What is a care plan?

Care plans are designed to allow patients with *chronic medical illnesses* to undertake a prolonged, coordinated review with their GP and Practice Nurse and to get *subsidised access to Allied Health Services* through Medicare.

What constitutes a *Chronic Medical Illness*?

A chronic medical illness is a defined medical condition lasting 3 months or more (or likely to last that long)

Examples of common chronic medical conditions in Australia are:

- Diabetes
- Heart conditions
- Lung conditions (eg COPD / Severe Asthma)
- Previous or current cancer diagnosis
- Osteoporosis (thinning of the bones)
- Neurological or Brain conditions (eg Parkinsons or MS)
- Chronic Pain
- Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) and other hormone conditions
- Endometriosis
- Chronic bowel conditions
- Congenital disorders

Who can I see and how often?

Allied Health Practitioners include physiotherapists, osteopaths, dietitians, psychologists and more. Each Care plan allows 5 subsidised allied health visits.

A care plan can be renewed every 12 months.

How will a Care Plan Benefit me?

We think that undertaking a care plan has a number of benefits. Here are the main ones:

- 1) By undertaking a Care Plan, you know that your medical team *understand* what medical issues you have and what *your priorities* are.
- 2) A care plan also gives you the opportunity to *ask questions* and to learn about your specific medical conditions and what *treatment* you can expect.
- 3) After undertaking a care-plan, Medicare will subsidise a total of *5 visits* to one or more appropriate Allied Health Professionals, such as a physio or dietitian, to help you to optimise your well-being.



An example:

“John has diabetes and arthritis and undertakes a care plan to address all of his health issues.

John’s nurse identifies a number of priorities for John during their chat about his health.

While John’s medical care has previously focussed on his diabetes, the care plan offers him to opportunity to outline his own concerns which relate mostly to the pain he gets in his knees when he walks.

John’s medical team design a tailored care plan which involves semi-regular visits with a diabetes educator to ensure his diabetes is looked after, but also organise a physiotherapist and exercise physiologist to educate John how to strengthen his legs and control his weight through exercise and diet, thus improving the pain in his legs which was his priority.

The care plan and the subsequent review sessions also allows John’s GP the opportunity to organise some preventive screening tests for John to help reduce his risk of having a heart attack, stroke or cancer diagnosis and to optimise his overall health and well-being. “

If you think you might be eligible for a care plan, or would like to know more, speak with our friendly staff today.

I have organised a care plan, what should I prepare?

- If you have a list of your current medications or a pill pack, have this available.
- If you have seen any specialists, knowing who they are can be of help
- If you have seen a particular Allied Health Practitioner in the past, or would like to see someone specific, knowing who they are can help.
- Ask yourself:
 - “what rating would I give my overall health out of 10?”
 - “what changes would help me improve this score in the next 12 months?”