

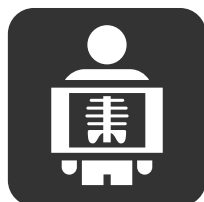
USING HEALTH SERVICES IN THE ACT



ACT
Government
Health



Phone 13 14 50 for a free interpreter.



If you or your family are sick or injured, sometimes it can be difficult to know which health service to use, when you can use it, and how much it will cost. You can use this book to help you make the right decision about using health services in the ACT.

Accessibility

The ACT Government is committed to making its information, services, events and venues as accessible as possible.

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like to receive this publication in an alternative format such as large print, please phone 13 22 81 or email HealthACT@act.gov.au



If English is not your first language and you require a translating and interpreting service, please phone 131 450.

If you are deaf, or have a speech or hearing impairment and need the teletypewriter service, please phone 13 36 77 and ask for 13 22 81.

For speak and listen users, please phone 1300 555 727 and ask for 13 22 81. For more information on these services visit <http://www.relayservice.com.au>

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www.health.act.gov.au | www.act.gov.au

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Which health service do I need?

	Emergency Department (page 24)	For serious illness or injury (like breathing problems, bleeding that does not stop, broken bones, head injuries, or chest pain), call 000 for an ambulance or go to a hospital Emergency Department at any time (24 hours a day, seven days a week). See the map on page 27 for hospital locations.
	Local doctor or General Practitioner (GP) (page 10)	For most health problems and health checks, phone your local doctor for an appointment (a time to visit). Doctors are open at different times. If you need help and your doctor is closed, phone Healthdirect on 1800 022 222 for doctors who provide after-hours services or home visiting services.
	Walk-in Centres (page 15)	For treatment of minor illness and injury (like colds, eye or ear infections, and minor cuts), go to a Walk-in Centre between 7:30am and 10:00pm on any day (seven days a week). You do not need to make an appointment. The Walk-in Centre can only help adults and children over 2 years old. See the map on page 27 for Walk-in Centre locations.
	Pharmacy or chemist (page 16)	For advice about minor illness and injury, go to your local pharmacy (also called a chemist). Pharmacies are open at different times. Usually, you do not need to make an appointment.
	Healthdirect health information phone line (page 14)	If you do not know what to do about a health problem, or you do not know which health service to go to in your area, phone Healthdirect on 1800 022 222 at any time (24 hours a day, seven days a week). You can also find health services information online at: www.health.act.gov.au/health-services

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Interpreter 131 450

An interpreter is a person who speaks two or more languages. They help you to talk with people who speak a different language. You can show staff this page to ask for an interpreter.



You can use an interpreter to help you make a health service appointment. Phone 131 450 for the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) and name your language. Then give the phone number of the health service.

You can also use an interpreter when you visit the health service. You should tell the health service that you need an interpreter when you make your appointment. The health service will arrange an interpreter. If you do not tell the health service that you need an interpreter before your visit, you can still ask for a telephone interpreter when you arrive.

This is a free service and the interpreter will not give your

information to anyone else. You can ask for a male or female interpreter, and to have the interpreter speaking on the telephone or sitting with you at the appointment.

It is your right to have an interpreter. You should not feel embarrassed or worried to ask for one.

If you can not go to your appointment, you should tell the health service as soon as possible, so they can tell the interpreter.

TIS has interpreters in over 160 languages.

For more information about TIS, visit: www.tisnational.gov.au



Public and private health care systems

Australia has public and private health care systems. Each system has its own health services and hospitals.

The public health care system is run by the government, but is different in each state or territory. The private health care system is run by private organisations and companies.

If you have a Medicare card, you can use public health services (like going to a public hospital or seeing a local doctor) and these will be free or partly paid for by the government through a program called Medicare (see page 6). If you have a Centrelink concession card, you can get further discounts on some public health services (see page 8).

If you are an asylum seeker and you are not eligible for a Medicare card, you can still use health services in ACT public hospitals for free, and ACT public dental and community health services for free or at a reduced cost. You need to show an ACT Services Access Card when you use these services (see page 9).

If you have private health insurance, you can use private health services (like going to a private hospital or seeing a private dentist) and these will be free or partly paid for by the private health insurance company (see page 5).





Private health insurance

You can buy private health insurance so you and your family can use health services that Medicare does not pay for, like private hospital services, private dentists, and traditional Chinese medicine, at a reduced cost.

You can also get private health insurance to pay for you and your family when you need an ambulance (see page 25). If you have private health insurance, you should ask the insurance company if you are covered for ambulance services. You can also get 'ambulance only' insurance, which costs less than private health insurance and only pays for ambulance services. You might not need ambulance insurance if you have an ACT Services Access Card, Centrelink Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card. Ambulance services are free in the ACT for people with these cards.

Different private health insurance companies (also called private health funds) sell different kinds of insurance for different prices. If you buy private health insurance, you can choose what kind of private health insurance you buy, and which private health insurance company you buy it from.

Most permanent residents and citizens of Australia do not need to buy private health insurance if they do not want to. However, some people may need to pay more tax in Australia if they do not have private health insurance.

Some people must buy private health insurance if they visit Australia on certain visas, like students from other countries. Even if it is not a visa requirement, temporary residents and visitors to Australia should consider buying private health insurance, to help them pay for any health services they might need while they are in Australia. Otherwise, visitors may need to pay for the full cost of health services, which can be expensive.

For more information about private health insurance, call 1300 737 299 or visit:
www.privatehealth.gov.au



Medicare card

Medicare Australia is a government program that helps you pay for health services.

Having a Medicare card means:

- free or discounted treatment at the doctor, some optometrists (eye doctors), and some other health services
- free or discounted X-rays and blood tests
- free treatment at the public hospital.

Always show your Medicare card when you use health services, if you have one.



Medicare **does not** pay for ambulance costs, most dental services, glasses, staying in a private hospital, and some other health services. You should ask whether a health service is covered by Medicare before you use it.

The Medicare Safety Net is a program for people that need a lot of health services in a year. Once you have spent a certain amount of money on health services, you can pay less for some health services for the rest of the year.

If you are single and do not have any children, Medicare will keep count of how many health services you use, so they will know if you reach the Safety Net amount. You only need to tell Medicare if you change your address or phone number.

Couples and families need to tell Medicare to count your family's health services together, so you may reach the Safety Net amount sooner.

There are five Medicare offices in the ACT. They can help you with any problems to do with Medicare. Some Medicare offices are in the same place as Centrelink offices (see page 8):

Medicare office	Address	Phone number
Medicare Belconnen	Level 1, North Point Plaza 8 Chandler Street Belconnen, ACT, 2617	132 011
Medicare Braddon	Level 1 13 Lonsdale Street Braddon, ACT, 2612	
Medicare Gungahlin	Shop 30-33 Woolworths Building The Marketplace Gungahlin 30 Hibberson Street Gungahlin, ACT, 2912	
Medicare Tuggeranong	Tuggeranong Square Cnr Anketell Street & Reed Street South Tuggeranong, ACT, 2900	
Medicare Woden	Penrhyn House Ground Floor 2-6 Bowes Street Woden, ACT, 2606	

There is more information about Medicare at: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/dhs/medicare

Health services may have different rules for giving free or discounted services to people with a Medicare card. When you use a health service, you should ask them about their Medicare card rules.



Centrelink concession cards

Centrelink is a government program that provides different social or welfare services and payments.

Some people can get a Centrelink Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card. These 'concession cards' can help you get further discounts when using some health services. For example:

- some medicines prescribed by the doctor will be discounted
- free emergency ambulance service in the ACT
- discounted treatment at the ACT public dental service.

Always show your concession card when you use health services, if you have one.

There are five Centrelink offices in the ACT. They can help you with any problems to do with concession cards. Some Centrelink offices are in the same place as Medicare offices (see page 7):

There is more information about Centrelink at: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/dhs/centrelink

Health services may have different rules for giving free or discounted services to people with a concession card. When you use a health service, you should ask them about their concession card rules. Medicare (see page 7) does not pay for all health services.



Centrelink office	Address	Phone number
Centrelink Belconnen	Level 1, North Point Plaza 8 Chandler Street Belconnen ACT 2617	131 202 (Multilingual Phone Service)
Centrelink Braddon	Ground floor 13 Lonsdale Street Braddon ACT 2612	
Centrelink Gungahlin	Shop 33, The Marketplace Gungahlin 30 Hibberson Street Gungahlin ACT 2912	
Centrelink Tuggeranong	Tuggeranong Square Corner of Anketell Street and Reed Street, Tuggeranong ACT 2900	
Centrelink Woden	Penrhyn House Ground Floor 2-6 Bowes Street Woden ACT 2606	



ACT Services Access Card

If you are an asylum seeker, you can apply for an ACT Services Access Card. The ACT Services Access Card makes it easier for asylum seekers to use ACT Government services. You can show this card to use some health services, transport, education, housing and legal services for free or at a reduced cost.



An asylum seeker is a person who has left their home country and is asking for protection in another country as a refugee, but they have not yet been accepted as a refugee.

If you are eligible, you can get a card for you and each of your family members. You can use the card for six months. If you are still an asylum seeker after six months, you need to apply for a new card.

If you are an asylum seeker but you do not have an ACT Services Access Card, you can still use all the same services, but you will need to pay the full cost.

You can ask Companion House for help to get an ACT Services Access Card (see page 17).

ACT public dental and community health services may have different rules for giving free or discounted services to people with an ACT Services Access Card. When you use a health service, you should ask the health service what their ACT Services Access Card rules are.

There is more information about the ACT Services Access Card at:
www.communityservices.act.gov.au/multicultural/access_card



Going to the doctor

When you need to go to a health service, you will usually go to a local doctor or General Practitioner (also called a GP). These doctors work in family and community medicine. Some doctors work in medical centres and some work in their own offices.

There are many different medical centres and doctors' offices in the ACT. You can choose a male or female doctor. To find your nearest doctor, phone Healthdirect on 1800 022 222 or search on the internet at: www.health.act.gov.au/health-services

You can make your own appointment with the doctor when you are sick, or if you feel healthy but want a health check or a 'check up' to make sure you do not have any health problems. A doctor can also tell you if you need vaccination or immunisation to protect you from some kinds of illness.

You can choose to change your doctor at any time. If you want to go to a different medical centre or doctor's office then you should give your new doctor a list of the medicines you are taking and a copy of your medical records. You can ask for a copy of your medical records from your doctor, but you should ask if you will need to pay for this.

If you are an asylum seeker, refugee, or a new arrival to Australia, you can see a doctor at Companion House for free without a Medicare card for your first 12 months in Australia (see page 17).

You can search for doctors who speak different languages at:
www.findahealthservice.act.gov.au/language

You can search for doctors of different ethnicities at:
www.findahealthservice.act.gov.au/ethnicity



If you can not find a doctor who speaks your language, you can call 131 450 for an interpreter. It is your right to have an interpreter. You should not feel embarrassed or worried to ask for one. Doctors can phone the TIS Doctors Priority Line for free interpreting services 24 hours a day, every day of the year.



Paying for the doctor

Different doctors charge different costs. Some doctors may '*bulk bill*,' if you have a Medicare card. This means the service is *free* because the doctor will receive money from Medicare for the service provided to you. If the doctor bulk bills, you will be asked to sign a form so Medicare can pay your doctor for the service.

If the doctor does not bulk bill, you will be asked to pay for your treatment. You may be able to get some of the costs back from Medicare or your private health insurance fund. Keep all receipts from the health service, because you will need these to get money back. Call Medicare on 132 011 to ask how to get money back after seeing a doctor.

It can be difficult to find a doctor that bulk bills in the ACT. You can ask if the doctor bulk bills when you make an appointment (see page 12). Some doctors choose to bulk bill certain patients, like patients with a Centrelink concession card. You can ask if the doctor can bulk bill you.





Booking a doctor's appointment

An appointment means agreeing to meet someone, like a doctor, at a certain time and place.

You need to book your own appointment for most health services. You can use these words to help you book an appointment on the phone or when visiting the health service:

Booking an appointment

Hello, I would like to make an appointment to see doctor _____
(doctor's name).

Does the doctor bulk bill?

Can I have an appointment on _____ (day and time)?

My name is _____.

My date of birth is _____.

I would like a _____ (language) interpreter when I see the doctor.

Thank you. Goodbye.

Writing down the time and date of your appointment in your diary, calendar or mobile phone might help you arrive on time. If you can not go to the appointment, you need to tell the health service as soon as possible.



Questions to ask the doctor

When you visit the doctor, you should ask questions so you better understand your health or treatment for health problems.

If you take this book to the doctor, it will be easier to remember the questions. You can ask the doctor any questions about your health or your treatment, and you can write down the answers to take home on the last page of this book. You can ask questions like:

Questions about health problems:

- What is the name of the problem?
- How serious is this problem?
- What causes it?
- Can I pass it on to other people?
- Is treatment required? If so, what is it?
- Is there anything I can do to make it better myself?
- How long is it likely to last?

Questions about treatment:

- How effective is this treatment?
- Are there any risks or side effects?
- Are there other ways to treat the problem?
- How long will I need the treatment for?
- What will happen if I do not have the treatment?
- How much will the treatment cost?

Questions about tests:

- What is the test for?
- How is the test done?
- Are there any risks of having this test?
- How accurate are the results of the test?
- What will happen once we know the result of the test?
- How much will the test cost?

Questions about medicine:

- Why do I need this medicine?
- How long do I need to take this medicine for?
- Are there any side effects of taking the medicine?
- What would happen if I do not take the medicine?
- When should I take this medicine?
- Will it affect any other medicines I take, including any herbal medicine or complementary medicine?
- How much will the medicine cost?

Doctors may not always recommend you take medicine. They may recommend other things you can do to be healthy instead. You can ask your doctor why they did not give you medicine, if you are worried.

Questions adapted from: www.healthdirect.gov.au/questions-to-ask-your-doctor



Healthdirect health information phone line



You can call Healthdirect on 1800 022 222 at any time (24 hours a day, seven days a week) to get advice from a nurse about any health

problem. You can also ask the nurse about finding a doctor, pharmacist or dentist in your area, including after-hours services or home visiting services.

Healthdirect can also give you advice about pregnancy, birth and looking after your baby. Call 1800 882 436 at any time for the Pregnancy, Birth and Baby helpline.



You can call 131 450 to ask for an interpreter to help you call Healthdirect. It is free to call Healthdirect from a landline (like a home phone), but it may cost money if you call from a mobile phone.

You can also find health services information online at: www.health.act.gov.au/health-services





Walk-in Centres

If you or your family have minor injury or illness, you can go to a Walk-in Centre. You can get free treatment from nurses at the Walk-in Centre and you do not need an appointment. Walk-in Centres are open from 7:30am to 10:00pm every day.

Walk-in Centres can help with:

- cuts and bruises;
- minor infections;
- coughs and colds;
- skin problems; and
- other minor injury and illness.



Walk-in Centre
walkincentre.act.gov.au



If you have a sick child under 2 years old, or if you have a serious injury or illness, you should not go to a Walk-in Centre. If the Walk-in Centre can not help you, they will tell you which health service you should go to.

There are two Walk-in Centres in the ACT:

Walk-in Centre	Address
Belconnen Community Health Centre	Corner of Lathlain Street and Cohen Street Belconnen ACT 2617
Tuggeranong Community Health Centre	Corner of Anketell Street and Pitman Street Tuggeranong ACT 2900

For more information about Walk-in Centres, phone the Canberra Connect Contact Centre on 13 22 81.



Medicine and pharmacies (chemists)

A pharmacy (also called a chemist) is a place where you can buy medicines and other health products. You can also ask for free advice about minor injuries and illness. Usually, you do not need an appointment.

If your doctor wants you to have certain medicines, they will give you a piece of paper called a 'prescription.' This paper tells the pharmacy what medicine you need. There are some medicines you can only buy with a prescription. Most people can visit any pharmacy to buy the prescription medicine.

If you are an asylum seeker, you might need to go to a certain pharmacy. You should contact Companion House (see page 17) or the Red Cross on (02) 6234 7695 for more information.

Take the prescription to a pharmacy with your Medicare Card and Centrelink Health Care Card, if you have one. Usually you will need to wait 5-10 minutes for the pharmacist to get the medicine for you. Sometimes the doctor orders a 'repeat' of a prescription, which means you can buy the medicine again using the same prescription.

For many medicines, you do not need a prescription. You can buy medicines for minor health problems, like a headache or a cold, without a prescription at the pharmacy. These are called 'over the counter' medicines.

When the pharmacist gives you the medicine they should explain how to use it. The instructions will also be written on the label of the medicine package, including:

- how much to take;
- what way to take it (e.g., orally [by mouth], putting it on the skin, etc.);

- when to take it (frequency);
- how many times you should take it, and for how many days (duration); and
- any other special instructions like taking it before, with, or after food.

It is very important to take medicine as you are told. Ask the pharmacist if you do not know how to take the medicine, and ask for an interpreter if you need one. Take the medicine for as long as you are told. Do not take more or less medicine than you are told. Do not take any other person's medicine, or share your medicine with other people.

Some medicines can cause problems (side effects). If you have problems, you may need to see the doctor again for a different medicine.

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) is a government program that helps you pay for some medicines. For PBS medicines, you only need to pay for part of the cost, which is also called a 'co-payment'.

The PBS Safety Net is a program for people that need a lot of medicines in a year. Once you have spent a certain amount of money on PBS medicines, you can pay less for PBS medicines for the rest of the year. You need to ask the pharmacist to keep count of how many PBS medicines you buy.

Sometimes a pharmacist will ask if you would like a less expensive brand of medicine, which is also called a 'generic' medicine. The less expensive brand of medicine works the same way as the more expensive brand, so you do not need to pay more to get better medicine. You can also ask your pharmacist if they have a less expensive brand of a medicine.



Companion House

The Medical Service at Companion House provides some health services, including a General Practitioner (GP), for refugees in their first twelve months in Australia. After twelve months, you can keep using the Companion House Medical Service until Companion House staff refer you to a GP or local doctor in your area.

The Medical Service is also used by asylum seekers and people from refugee backgrounds with complex needs.

The Medical Service will give you long visits with the doctor, and they will use an interpreter if you need one. The service is free.

The Medical Service can also help refer you to dentists (see page 22), specialists (see page 21), and other health workers like a dietitian (for information about healthy food), a podiatrist (for foot problems), or an audiologist (for ear or hearing problems).

If you have questions about Companion House Medical Service, phone (02) 6251 4550 and ask to talk to the 'practice nurse.'

You can visit Companion House at 41 Templeton Street, Cook ACT 2614.

For more information about Companion House, visit: www.companionhouse.org.au





Community Health Centre

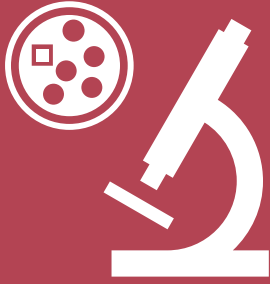
Your doctor might ask you to go to a Community Health Centre for special health services like nutrition (healthy food), podiatry (foot care) and diabetes. You can also use some Community Health Centre services without being referred by a doctor, like a Child Health Clinic.

There are six Community Health Centres in the ACT:

Community Health Centre	Address	Phone number
Belconnen Community Health Centre	Corner of Lathlain Street and Cohen Street Belconnen ACT 2617	(02) 6207 9977 (Community Health Intake Line)
City Community Health Centre	Level 2, 1 Moore Street Canberra City ACT 2601	
Dickson Community Health Centre	Dickson Place Dickson ACT 2602	
Gungahlin Community Health Centre	Corner of Ernest Cavanagh St and Fussell Lane Gungahlin ACT 2912	
Phillip Community Health Centre	Corner of Corinna Street and Keltie Street Phillip ACT 2606	
Tuggeranong Community Health Centre	Corner of Anketell Street and Pitman Street Tuggeranong ACT 2900	

You can book an appointment for community health services by phoning the Community Health Intake line on (02) 6207 9977 from 8:00am-5:00pm, Monday to Friday. You can also ask them what services you can use at the Community Health Centre, and how much services will cost.

There is more information about Community Health Centres at:
www.health.act.gov.au/health-services/community-based-health-services/



Blood tests and other tests

If the doctor wants you to have a blood test, you will be given a form. This form tells the testing centre (also called a pathology centre) what to test your blood for. It will also give you information on whether you need to fast (not eat) before the test. The same kind of form is also given if you need to give a urine or stool (also called faeces or poo) sample.

For a blood test, someone will use a needle to take a small amount of blood, usually from your arm. For urine and stool samples, you will be given a jar to put the sample in. You can do this in the toilet of the testing centre, or at home. You can ask the staff at the testing centre where you should do it. If you do not know what to do, you can ask the staff any questions.

You do not have to give blood, urine or stools for testing if you do not want to. If you do not understand what the test is for, you can ask the doctor to explain.

There are many different testing centres in the ACT. To find your nearest testing centre, search for 'pathology' on the internet at: www.health.act.gov.au/health-services



Sometimes you need to make an appointment for a blood test. Phone the testing centre to ask if you need an appointment.

Remember to take the form which the doctor gave you when you go to the testing centre. The results will be sent to your doctor and they will contact you if you need another appointment.

To make it easier to collect blood, drink lots of water before the test (unless you are told not to).

The cost of some tests will be partly or fully paid by Medicare. You can ask your doctor or the testing centre about the cost of your test.



Scans

If the doctor wants you to have a scan, you will be given a request form. The request form says what kind of scan you need, and what part of your body will be scanned. It may be for an X-ray, CT scan, MRI scan or ultrasound. Phone the number on the form to make an appointment. They will usually ask for:

- your name;
- your date of birth; and
- the name of the doctor who ordered the scan.

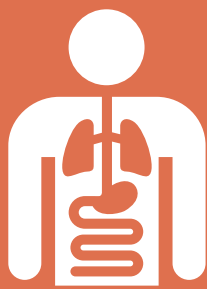
They will also tell you how to get ready for the scan (like drinking water before a pregnancy ultrasound).

There are many different places where you can get scans in the ACT. To find your nearest centre, search for 'radiology and imaging' on the internet at: www.health.act.gov.au/health-services

Remember to take the request form which the doctor gave you when you go to the scan centre. Ask the staff to send the results to your doctor. Your doctor will contact you if you need another appointment.

The cost of some scans will be partly or fully paid by Medicare. You can ask your doctor or the scan centre about the cost of your scan.





Specialists

Your doctor may refer you to a medical specialist if you need special help, tests or treatments. Specialists are doctors that are highly trained in a certain area of medicine. Usually, you can not see a specialist without a referral from your local doctor or GP.

If your doctor refers you to a hospital specialist, they will send the specialist a referral letter to ask for an appointment for you. The date of your appointment depends on your health problem, and how bad it is.

Seeing a specialist at a public hospital will be free or discounted under Medicare, but you may have to wait several months for the appointment.

Contact your local doctor or GP if your health changes, or if you are worried about your health while you are on the specialist's waiting list for an appointment. Your doctor will be able to check your health, and send new information to the specialist if needed.

When the specialist makes an appointment for you, they may send you a letter or call you on the phone to tell you the date, time and address of your appointment.

When you see a specialist at the hospital, you will need to bring your appointment letter with you, any information your doctor gave you to give to the specialist, and your Medicare card, if you have one. The specialist may also ask you to bring scans or X-rays, if you have them.

Tell the specialist if:

- you do not need an appointment;
- you cannot go to an appointment;
- you have any questions;
- your contact details (phone number and address) change; or
- you need an interpreter (medical specialists can phone the TIS Doctors Priority Line for free interpreting services 24 hours a day, every day of the year).

If your local doctor or GP refers you to a private specialist, you will need to phone the specialist to make an appointment. You may also have to wait several weeks or months for the appointment. Some private specialists bulk bill people with Centrelink Health Care Cards (see page 8). If the specialist does not bulk bill, you will be asked to pay for your treatment. You may be able to get some of the costs back from Medicare or your private health insurance company, if you have one. Keep all receipts from a specialist, because you will need these to get money back.

You can talk to your doctor or the specialist about the cost of a specialist appointment.



Dentist

A dentist is a person who can help you with tooth or mouth problems. In the ACT, there are public and private dentists. Only some people can use public dental services. ACT public dental services are available for:

- adults who have a Centrelink Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card;
- asylum seekers (with or without an ACT Services Access Card);
- all children aged under 5 years who live in the ACT;
- all children aged 5 years to under 14 years who live or go to school in the ACT; and
- children aged under 18 years who live or go to school in the ACT and are covered by a Centrelink concession card.

You can book your own appointment for public dental services. The cost of public dental services is discounted. You can ask the dental service how much your appointment will cost. If you need special treatment, the dental service may refer you to a private dentist or specialist.

There are five public dental services in the ACT:

Public dental service	Address	Phone number
Belconnen Dental Clinic	56 Lathlain Street Belconnen ACT 2617	(02) 6207 9977 (Community Health Intake Line)
Civic Dental Clinic	Level 1, 1 Moore Street Civic ACT 2601	
Gungahlin Dental Clinic	Corner of Ernest Cavanagh Street and Fussell Lane Gungahlin ACT 2912	
Phillip Dental Clinic	Corner of Corinna Street and Keltie Street Phillip ACT 2606	
Tuggeranong Child and Youth Dental Clinic	Corner of Anketell Street and Pitman Street Tuggeranong ACT 2901	

If it is not an emergency, you may have to wait to get an appointment at the public dental service. You may be able to get an appointment at a private dentist sooner, but this will cost more than public dental services. If it is an emergency, you can phone the public dental service to ask if they can help you.

There are many different private dentists in the ACT. To find your nearest dentist, search for 'dental services' on the internet at: www.health.act.gov.au/health-services

For the first 12 months in Australia, new arrivals can get an appointment at public dental services without waiting. You need to get a referral from Companion House to do this (see page 17).

A parent or carer should go with a child to all dental appointments. This helps you to know about the health of your child's teeth and mouth.



Hospitals

You can go to a hospital in an emergency (see page 24), or if a doctor refers you to the hospital for tests, an operation (also called surgery), and other health services.

Public hospitals in the ACT are:

Hospital name	Address	Phone number
The Canberra Hospital	Yamba Drive Garran, ACT 2605	(02) 6244 2222
Calvary Public Hospital	Haydon Drive Bruce, ACT 2617	(02) 6201 6111

Private hospitals in the ACT are:

Hospital name	Address	Phone number
Calvary John James Hospital	173 Strickland Crescent Deakin, ACT 2600	(02) 6281 8100
Calvary Private Hospital	Corner of Belconnen Way and Haydon Drive Bruce, ACT 2617	(02) 6201 6363
National Capital Private Hospital	Corner of Gilmore Crescent and Hospital Road Garran, ACT 2605	(02) 6222 6666

Some private hospitals are located next to public hospitals (see map on page 27).

The Canberra Hospital (a public hospital):





Emergency department

If you need emergency health care for problems like breathing problems, bleeding that does not stop, broken bones, head injuries, or chest pain, call 000 for an ambulance (see page 25) or go to the Emergency Department at Canberra Hospital or Calvary Public Hospital. If you do not know if it is an emergency, you can call 000 to check.

Emergency Departments are open all the time (24 hours a day, seven days a week). When you go to the Emergency Department:

- take your Medicare Card, your Centrelink Health Care Card, and your ACT Services Access Card, if you have one;
- ask for an interpreter if you need one; and
- ask the staff before you eat or drink.

No appointments are taken in an Emergency Department. People with the most urgent problems will be seen first. You may have to wait several hours to be seen, depending on your health problem.

You can visit: www.health.act.gov.au/emergency/live-emergency-department-activity to see how many people are already waiting for treatment at the Emergency Department at Canberra Hospital and Calvary Public Hospital.

The Canberra Hospital Emergency Department:





Ambulance

You should call an ambulance on 000 in any medical emergency. A medical emergency is when you or another person needs help very quickly with a serious illness or injury. If you do not know if it is an emergency, you can call 000 to check.

An ambulance is a vehicle, like a van, which will come to you when you need help in a medical emergency. The people in the ambulance will help you and take you to hospital if you need it.

You should NOT call an ambulance if:

- you do not need help very quickly; or
- you need transport for a health service appointment that is not an emergency.

How to phone an ambulance:

1. Dial 000
2. You will be asked if you need police, fire or ambulance
3. Say you want an ambulance
4. A person from the ambulance service will talk to you
5. Say: – your name
– the address where you need the ambulance to come
– what the problem is
6. Speak clearly and slowly
7. The person from the ambulance service will ask you some questions. Try to answer all these questions, even if you do not think they are important
8. Do anything the person from the ambulance service tells you
9. Do not hang up until the person from the ambulance service tells you.

000 is free to call from any phone, whether it is a public phone, a home phone that has been disconnected, or a mobile phone that has no credit. For mobile phones, dial 112 if 000 does not work.



You can phone the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450 and ask the interpreter to phone the ambulance for you.

Tell everyone in your family, including children, how to call 000.

You need to pay for ambulance services in the ACT unless you have an ACT Services Access Card, Centrelink Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card (but they may not be free in other states or territories in Australia). If you have one of these cards, ambulance services are free. Otherwise, ambulance services can be expensive.

Medicare does not pay for ambulance services. You will not need to pay for the ambulance when you use it, but you will be sent a bill later. You can get private health insurance to help pay for ambulance services (see more information about private health insurance on page 5). You should always call an ambulance in a medical emergency, even if you are worried about the cost.



Health rights and responsibilities

It is important that you understand your rights and responsibilities using Australian health services. When you use a health service in Australia you can:

- have a free interpreter if you need one;
- ask questions; and
- have your personal information kept private.

You need to:

- treat staff respectfully;
- get to appointments on time;
- phone early if you can not come to an appointment; and
- follow staff instructions.

If you are worried about a problem with a health service, including using an interpreter, you can talk to the health service staff. If you are not happy with their response, you can get help from:

ACT Health

The Consumer Feedback Coordinator
Quality and Safety Unit

ACT Health

PO Box 11

Woden ACT 2601

Telephone: (02) 6207 7627

www.health.act.gov.au/feedback

OR

ACT Human Rights Commission

The Health Services Commissioner
GPO Box 158

Canberra City ACT 2601

Telephone: (02) 6205 2222

www.hrc.act.gov.au/health

You can ask for a brochure with information about your rights, called The Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights: A guide for patients, consumers, carers and families.

You can also read about the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights in English and 17 other languages at:

www.safetyandquality.gov.au/national-priorities/charter-of-healthcare-rights/australian-charter-of-healthcare-rights-alternate-versions

All ACT Health facilities and grounds, including the Canberra Hospital and grounds, are completely smoke free. For help to quit smoking, call Quitline on 13 78 48.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR HEALTHCARE RIGHTS?

The Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights describes the rights of patients and other people using the Australian health system. These rights are essential to make sure that, wherever and whenever care is provided, it is of high quality and is safe.

ACCESS

You have a right to health care.

SAFETY

You have a right to safe and high quality care.

RESPECT

You have a right to respect, dignity and consideration.

COMMUNICATION

You have a right to be informed about services, treatment, options and costs in a clear and open way.

PARTICIPATION

You have a right to be included in decisions and choices about your care.

PRIVACY

You have a right to privacy and confidentiality of your personal information.

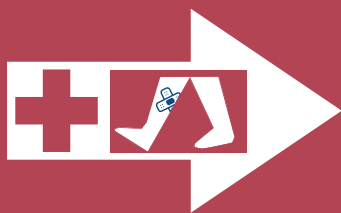
COMMENT

You have a right to comment on your care and to have your concerns addressed.

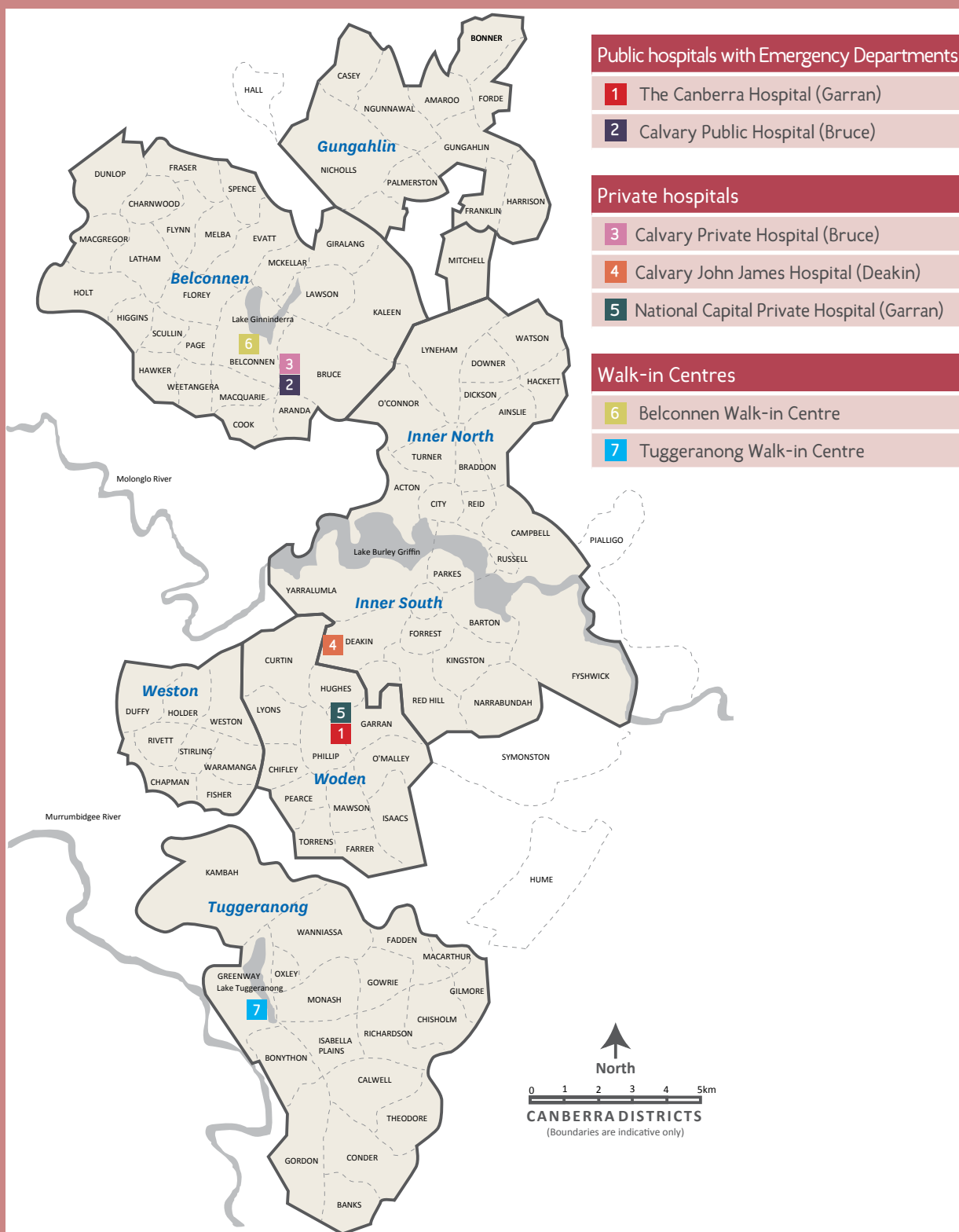


For more information on the Charter ask for a flier on the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights, or visit www.safetyandquality.gov.au





Map: ACT public and private hospitals and Walk-in Centres





Which bus do I take?

You can fill this out with help from ACTION at www.action.act.gov.au or telephone on 13 17 10. Call TIS first on 131 450 if you need an interpreter to call ACTION.

Place	Address	Bus number/s
My local doctor or GP		
My Walk-in Centre		
My hospital		
My Medicare office		
My Centrelink office		



Free computer and internet access

You can use the internet to visit websites listed in this book and find more information about health services in the ACT. ACT Government Libraries provide free use of computers with internet access, and free use of wireless internet (also called 'Wi-Fi').

You will need to be a library member and make a booking to use a library computer. It is free to become a library member. You can ask the library how to do this.

To use wireless internet, you need to bring your own laptop computer, smartphone or tablet.

There are ten ACT Government Libraries:

ACT Government Library	Address	Phone number
Belconnen Library	12 Chandler Street Belconnen ACT 2617	(02) 6205 9000
Civic Library	Civic Square, London Circuit Canberra City ACT 2600	
Dickson Library	Dickson Shops (off Antill Street) Dickson ACT 2602	
Erindale Library	McBryde Crescent Wanniassa ACT 2903	
Gungahlin Library	Corner of Hibberson Street and Gozzard Street Gungahlin ACT 2912	
Kingston Library	52 Giles Street Kingston ACT 2604	
Kippax Library	Hardwick Crescent Holt ACT 2615	
Tuggeranong Library	Cowlishaw Street Tuggeranong ACT 2900	
Woden Library and ACT Heritage Library	Corinna Street Phillip ACT 2606	

You can also use free public wireless internet in some parts of Canberra. You can visit: www.digitalcanberra.com.au to find out where you can use free public wireless internet.



ACT Health contact list

ACT Health general enquiries	13 2281
Interpreter service (160 languages)	13 1450
ACT Pathology	6244 2930
Pathology collection centres	
Belconnen	6205 1315
Calvary Hospital	6201 6270
Canberra Hospital	6244 2816
Charnwood	6258 0787
Gungahlin	6174 5264
Lyneham	6262 7522
Tuggeranong	6293 4919
Home visits	6244 2816
Customer service	6244 2932
Aged Care and Rehabilitation Service	6244 2926
Capital Region Cancer Service	6244 2738
Nurse Care Co-ordinators	
Head and Neck Cancer	6244 3446
Malignant Haematology	6244 3447
Lung Cancer & Mesothelioma patients	6244 3895
Prostate & Urology	6244 3897
Medical Oncology	6244 2188
Radiation Oncology	6244 2241
Haematology	6244 2929
Immunology	6244 5586
Gastrointestinal	6174 5269
Palliative Care	6244 4269
Advanced Breast Cancer	6244 3896
BreastScreen ACT & SE NSW	6205 4444 or 13 2050
Child Health Services	
Maternal & Child Health	6207 9977
The Child at Risk Health Unit	6244 2712
Centre for Newborn Care	6244 4056
Client Support Services	
Independent Living Centre	6205 1900
Sexual Health	6244 2184
Community Health (Intake Line)	6207 9977
Alcohol & Drug Helpline (24hrs), Allied Health, Child Health Services, Community Nursing, Diabetes Service, Health Centres, Nutrition, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Social Workers	
Dental	
After hours information line	6205 1653
Belconnen Dental Clinic	6205 1541
Civic Dental Clinic	6205 0977
Phillip Dental Clinic	6205 1463
Tuggeranong Dental Clinic	6205 2768



Phone 13 14 50 for a free interpreter.

Drugs & Alcohol	
Alcohol & Drug Helpline	6207 9977
Medicines and poisons	6205 1700
Chief Pharmacist	6205 1700
Community Health Centres	6207 9977
Belconnen, City, Dickson, Gungahlin, Phillip, Tuggeranong	
Health Complaints and Consumer Feedback	
Calvary Hospital (Public)	6201 6111
Canberra Hospital and Health Services	6207 7627
Community Health	6207 7627
Food, and Public Health	6205 1700
Human Rights Commission	6205 2222
Healthdirect 24 hour health advice	1800 022 222
Health Promotion	13 2281
Health Grants	6205 1325
Health Protection Service	
24 hour helpline	6205 1700
ACT Government Analytical Laboratory, Food safety, Hairdressing, Licensing requirements, Radiation safety, Sanitation, Smoke-free, Tobacco, Pharmaceuticals, Water	
Disease and Infection Control	6205 2155
Immunisation enquiries	6205 2300
Hospitals	
Calvary Hospital (Public)	
General enquiries	6201 6111
Patient enquiries	6201 6221
Canberra Hospital	
General enquiries	6244 2222
Patient enquiries	6244 2072
Teletypewriter TTY Telephone <i>Restricted to TTY users</i>	6244 3800
Mental Health	
Calvary Hospital – Ward 2N	6201 6022
Hyson Green	6201 6000
Canberra Hospital – Adult Mental Health Unit	6244 3210
Child & Adolescent Crisis Assistance	6205 1971
Crisis Assessment & Treatment Team (24 hrs 7 days)	1800 629 354
Registration Boards/AHPRA (Health Professionals)	1300 419 495
Victims Support ACT	1800 822 272
Women's Health	
BreastScreen ACT & SE NSW	6205 4444 or 13 2050
ACT Pap Test Register	6205 1545
Women's Health Service	6205 1078
Youth Health	
Junction Youth Health Service	6232 2423



Acknowledgements

This resource is adapted with permission by ACT Health Multicultural Health Policy Unit from the Northern Territory Medicare Local document *Health Services Information For New Arrivals: Understanding the Australian health care system and how to access health services in Darwin*.

This resource has been prepared in collaboration with:

- ACT Medicare Local
- Companion House
- Health Care Consumers' Association of the ACT
- Canberra Multicultural Community Forum
- ACT Chinese Aged Care Information and Referral Service.

Health care symbols sourced from www.hablamosjuntos.org.





- Phone numbers or addresses of health services
- Appointment dates and times
- Information from the doctor (see page 13)
- A list of your medicines
- Instructions for taking new medicine
- Your food and medicine allergies.

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Phone 13 14 50 for a free interpreter.