Australian Government
Department of Human Services

Healthcare Identifiers Service—Authorised Employee User Guide

AUDIENCE
This guide is for authorised employees of a healthcare organisation participating in the Healthcare Identifiers (HI) Service.

REQUIRED READING
Make sure you have read the *Healthcare Identifiers Service Information Guide–Introduction and overview* material before reading this information guide.

REGISTERING AS AN AUTHORISED EMPLOYEE
Authorisation to access the HI Service will be provided by your organisation.

Your responsibilities as an authorised employee
Authorised employees are responsible for making sure patient information in their local software system is correct, up-to-date and has a healthcare identifier assigned to it. This helps make sure the right health information is associated with the right individual at the point of care.

Your duties as an authorised employee may include the following:

- requesting and collecting the individual healthcare identifier (IHI) number of any new patients
- creating and updating unverified IHIs for patients who do not have an IHI, or who you can't find an IHI for (for example, a newborn baby or an overseas visitor).
- creating and updating provisional IHIs for patients who can't be immediately identified. For example, an unconscious patient who is brought to a hospital. Once the person can be identified their provisional IHI can either be updated to an unverified IHI or merged with an existing verified IHI.
- notifying the HI Service when patients die.

Healthcare identifiers must be requested, collected and used in accordance with the *Healthcare Identifiers Act 2010* and the *Healthcare Identifiers Regulations 2010*. Failure to do so is an offence.

Understanding individual healthcare identifiers
There are three types of individual healthcare identifier, verified, unverified or provisional.

Verified IHI
When an IHI has a verified status it means we have seen evidence of an individual's identity, such as a passport, birth certificate or driver's licence. When a person enrols in the Medicare program or registers with the Department of Veterans' Affairs, we will automatically allocate a verified IHI if an unverified IHI does not exist.

Unverified IHI
When an IHI has an unverified status, it means a healthcare identifier was created for an individual at a healthcare facility, such as a hospital, and we haven't been provided with evidence of their identity.

Provisional IHI

When an IHI has a provisional status it means the identifier was created at a healthcare facility when an individual was unable to identify themselves (for example, they were unconscious). Provisional IHIs are temporary and expire after 90 days of no activity. You can update a provisional IHI to an unverified IHI or merge it with an existing verified IHI using your software system.

Things to be aware of when using the HI Service

- It's important to make sure that information you use to search for an IHI, such as a person's date of birth is accurate and complete.
- The HI Service processes all searches in good faith and on the understanding you are using the information the patient has given you in the right way. You must use the information a patient has given you to search for, or create an IHI in the HI system, even if you are aware of their real identity. For example, if a patient chooses to use a name other than their given name or to access healthcare services anonymously.
- Each time an IHI is searched for and retrieved in the system, the details of who requested the identifier is recorded in an audit log. Individuals registered for Online Services can view their IHI history online. Penalties for unauthorised access apply under the *Healthcare Identifiers Act 2010.*
- If you know a patient's details are out-of-date and they are enrolled in Medicare, encourage them to update their details with us.
- If you suspect a patient has multiple IHIs, tell us.
- We will only merge unverified and verified IHIs with a patient's permission.
- A person does not need their IHI to access healthcare services and shouldn't be refused treatment if they don't have an IHI, can't provide enough information to create an IHI, choose to seek care anonymously or use a name other than their given name.

Accessing the HI Service electronically

As an authorised employee you will be able to access the HI Service using your organisation's HI Service compatible software. If you have any problems with accessing the service electronically, you will need to talk to your organisation's Organisation Maintenance Officer.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Online   **humanservices.gov.au/healthprofessionals** then **Healthcare Identifiers Service**

Email   **healthcareidentifiers@humanservices.gov.au**

Call   **1300 361 457***

*Call charges apply