

# THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM IN AUSTRALIA

The Australian Healthcare System can seem quite complicated to someone who is not familiar with it. So, we have provided a list of words you might come across with an explanation for each to help you understand a little better.



## Medicare

This is the Government funded Australian health system for Australian citizens and residents only. Medicare is not generally available to Overseas Students and this is why international students studying in Australia must have OSHC.

## Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS)

A list of fees determined by the Government for medical procedures and treatments provided by doctors including GPs and specialists. A doctor can choose to charge more than these fees.

## General Practitioner (GP)

Is a doctor who is not a specialist, however, treats a range of general medical issues. A GP is who you would normally see in the first instance for any medical issues.

## Specialist

A medical doctor who specialises in treating patients within a specific category, such as a Cardiologist who specialises in treating people with heart conditions.

## Hospitals

There are two types of hospitals in Australia — Public Hospitals and Private Hospitals.

## Important information about Hospitals in Australia

Generally, you would only go straight to hospital if you have had an accident or emergency. If you go to hospital for a minor issue, you will wait a long time before seeing a doctor, many hours in most cases. This is because people in emergency cases or major accidents will require priority medical treatment. With ahm OSHC, you have the choice to have medical treatment at either a public or private hospital or you can see a GP. Another reason to go to hospital is if you are referred in advance by a GP or specialist to go to hospital for an operation.

## Public Hospitals

These are funded and operated by the Australian Government. In an emergency case, you will usually go to the emergency department of a public hospital.

## Private Hospitals

These are funded and operated by private organisations. We have agreements with many private hospitals where we'll cover the full cost of theatre and accommodation charges for eligible services, however, it is best to contact ahm OSHC to check you are being treated in a partner private hospital. Call us on 134 246 or email [oshc@ahm.com.au](mailto:oshc@ahm.com.au)

## Emergency Department

This is a department found in most Public Hospitals which is only for people who require urgent and immediate medical attention.



## Item Number

Every medical service and procedure has its own code or 'item number' which identifies it and determines the MBS fee. When you see a GP, the most common item numbers and their MBS fees are:

<b>Standard consultation</b>	MBS fee = \$35.60
<b>Long consultation</b>	MBS fee = \$69.00

(Current as at 01/07/12) MBS fees are subject to change.

All enquiries **134 148**  
Visit our website at **[ahm.com.au/oshc](http://ahm.com.au/oshc)**