



Provision of Ambulance Services

Frequently asked questions

Will Medicare cover ambulance accounts?

Medicare does not cover the cost of the provision of ambulance services.

Are any ambulance services provided at no cost?

Some ambulance services are provided free of charge to people who fall into the following categories listed below, provided, at the time of receiving ambulance services, they were in receipt of a benefit entitlement.

Concession card holders

- Health Care Concession Card holder
- Pensioner Concession Card holder
- Department of Veterans Affairs Card holder
- Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holder

Cover for concession card holders is PROVIDED for;

- Ambulance services in New South Wales
- Emergency ambulance services for all other States/Territories

Cover for concession card holders is NOT PROVIDED for;

- Repatriation back to home state for non-clinical reasons.
- Non-emergency ambulance services.

What do I do if I receive an account and I am a concession card holder?

In the event that you are provided with ambulance services you may still receive an account requesting payment. This occurs if the concession or other card details were not recorded at the time the service was provided.

If you are a Health Care Concession Card holder, Pensioner Concession Card holder, Department of Veterans Affairs Card holder or a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holder you will be required to provide your concession card number to the Ambulance Service of NSW. This can be done by either telephoning 1300 655 200 (toll free) or by returning the "tear off" section on the back of the account to the Revenue Accountant, Ambulance Service of NSW, Locked Bag 14, Rozelle, NSW, 2039.

How are ambulance charges determined?

The total number of kilometres for the provision of ambulance services are calculated by determining the total number of kilometres that are travelled by road, fixed wing aircraft or helicopter:

- From the base ambulance station nearest to the location where the person was provided with ambulance services and;
- From that location, to the place where that person disembarked from the ambulance (or, where more than one ambulance was used in the transport, disembarked from the last ambulance used in that transport); or where ambulance services were provided but transport was not necessary, and;
- From that place of disembarkation, to the base ambulance station referred to above.

Can I request the type of service?

No, the Ambulance Service of NSW will determine the most suitable type of transport after taking operational requirements into consideration, such as available resources and the need to maintain emergency response capability, and if required, following consultation with the relevant medical authorities.



How can I insure to cover ambulance costs?

There are a number of insurance options available. These are:

Ambulance Levy Payer

Private health fund members in NSW pay an “ambulance levy” as part of their basic hospital cover. Persons with / or considering this form of insurance are advised to check with their health fund to ascertain exactly what coverage is provided.

State Ambulance Insurance Plan

The Ambulance Service of NSW no longer operates an Ambulance Contribution Scheme however this product is still available from several of the larger private health funds.

Private Health Fund – Ambulance Only Cover

The major private health funds offer “ambulance only” products. The cost of purchasing this type of product varies and may not necessarily cover the costs of the provision of all ambulance services. Persons with / or considering this form of insurance are advised to check with their health fund to ascertain exactly what coverage is provided.

School/Group Contributions Scheme

School groups in NSW are able to obtain ambulance services coverage direct from Ambulance Service of NSW. This coverage provides ambulance services to children injured or who take ill while engaged in an approved school activity. Some conditions apply. Further information on this product is available by contacting the Ambulance Service of NSW on telephone 1300 655 200 (toll free).

Workers Compensation/Third Party Insurance

In certain circumstances compulsory third party (CTP) or workers compensation insurance may cover the provision of ambulance services. For further information please contact your insurance company or your employer.

Change to ambulance fees

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) recommended that the Ambulance Service of NSW change its revenue and charging structure over a three year period commencing 1 July 2006.

From 1 July 2008 residents of NSW and any other Australian state or territory that is party to a reciprocal arrangement will be charged at the rate of 51% of the actual cost of the provision of primary emergency ambulance services.

The Ambulance Service of NSW now recovers 100% of the cost of ambulance services provided to residents of states that do not have a reciprocal arrangement with NSW.

New fees

From 1 July 2010 NSW residents requiring road, fixed wing aircraft or helicopter or a combination of these, from the scene of an accident, illness or injury to a public hospital or other destination nominated by the Ambulance Service of NSW will be charged a call out fee of \$309 plus an additional charge of \$2.79 per kilometre or part thereof.

	Road		Fixed Wing	Helicopter
	Emergency	Non-emergency	Emergency	Emergency
Call - Out	\$309	\$244	\$309	\$309
Variable rate (p/km)	\$2.79	\$1.51	\$2.79	\$2.79
Maximum Charge	\$5,074	\$5,074	\$5,074	\$5,074

There are no changes to existing exemptions from ambulance fees – pensioners, health care card holders and veterans with an accepted war related injury continue to remain exempt from fees.

The Ambulance Service of NSW fees remain one of the lowest in Australia.



Any future increases will be cost indexed by IPART. This will ensure a financially sustainable ambulance service for the people of NSW into the future.

Am I covered if I travel interstate?

Non-pensioner NSW residents

Effective 1 July 2006 non-pensioner NSW residents travelling within Queensland and South Australia are responsible for the payment of accounts related to the provision of ambulance services by these states. Where the service is provided by these states to a NSW location, at the request of the Ambulance Service of NSW, the NSW State Government will continue to cover the costs. Non-pensioner residents in this situation should not receive an account, however if received, the account should be forwarded to the Revenue Accountant, Ambulance Service of NSW, Locked Bag 14, Rozelle, NSW, 2039 or alternatively telephone 9320 7692.

Pensioner NSW residents

Effective 1 July 2006 the NSW State Government has made special arrangements for payment of accounts related to the provision of ambulance services to pensioners by the Queensland or South Australian Ambulance Services. NSW pensioners who received an invoice from the Queensland Ambulance Service or the South Australian Ambulance Service can arrange payment or claim reimbursement for emergency services using the claim form provided on the Ambulance intranet at: www.ambulance.nsw.gov.au/docs/061102feeinvoiceform.pdf

For all other States/Territories in Australia emergency ambulance services are covered under reciprocal agreements. If unsure of your cover, please contact the Ambulance Service in the State in which you intend to travel.

If I receive an account what do I do?

Insurance Cover

If you have basic hospital cover, ambulance only cover or belong to the State Ambulance Insurance Plan you must have your membership verified by your insurer. This can be done either in person or by forwarding the account by mail to your insurer. Your insurer will then forward your details or payment as appropriate to the Ambulance Service on your behalf.

Pensioner

If you are an eligible pensioner you must provide your pension number by either telephoning 1300 655 200 (toll free) or by returning the "tear off" section on the back of the account to the Revenue Accountant, Ambulance Service of NSW, Locked Bag 14, Rozelle NSW 2039.

Interstate visitor with state ambulance cover

Queensland

Residents are covered under the Community Ambulance Cover scheme. Enquiries regarding payment of the account are made by telephoning 1300 369 003 for further instruction. It should be noted that not all services are covered.

South Australia

Residents who are covered by the South Australian Ambulance Insurance Scheme are to telephone (08) 8274 0432 or (08) 8274 0440 to verify eligibility. It should be noted that not all services are covered.

Other States

Are covered under reciprocal agreements with Western Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. A verified membership number must be provided. Verification is obtained by contacting your State Ambulance Service. It should be noted that not all services are covered.

Workers compensation / third party insurance

Should the account relate to a workplace injury or motor vehicle accident the "tear off" section of the account must be completed and returned to the Ambulance Service of NSW (see address – payment by mail). The top section of the account is to be forwarded to your insurer for payment as appropriate.

School / group contributions

If coverage has been taken out by either a school or group the contributor number plus school / group stamp must be provided on the "tear off" section of the account and returned to the Ambulance Service (see address - payment by mail).



Paying your account

If you do not fall within one of the abovementioned groups then payment of the account is your responsibility. The following methods are available:

- **Payment over the telephone using a credit card:** For credit card payments or account enquiries call 1300 655 200 (toll free).
- **Payment by POST billpay:** Pay in person at any Post Office, by telephone at 131 816 or go to www.postbillpay.com.au
- **B Pay:** Contact your bank, credit union or building society to make this payment from your cheque, savings or credit card account or visit www.bpay.com.au
- **Mail a cheque or money order to the Ambulance Service of NSW:** Ambulance Service of NSW, Locked Bag 14, Rozelle NSW 2039.

What if I am not covered by any of the above and do not pay my account?

If you are not entitled to free ambulance services, payment of the account within terms is required. Payment ensures that the Ambulance Service maintains the high standard of care provided. Non-payment may result in legal action.

What if I am unsure as to what to do regarding an account that I have received?

Please contact the Ambulance Customer Service Centre 'Enquiries' by telephoning 1300 655 200 (toll free).

Further information

Further information about the Ambulance Service of New South Wales is available on www.ambulance.nsw.gov.au

Disclaimer

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