



Hearing Services – (Voucher) Payments

Payments are made to hearing service providers for the delivery of services under the voucher system to eligible clients. The services include hearing assessments, the cost of the hearing device and its fitting, and the government contribution to the maintenance and repair of hearing devices.

HOW TO APPLY FOR GOVERNMENT-FUNDED ASSISTANCE

Applications can be picked up from offices of most doctors, hearing aid providers and Australian Hearing Centres. It is also possible to have an application sent to you by ringing Freecall **1800 500 726**.

Once your application has been processed, you need to get a signed medical certificate. The Office of Hearing Services will give you a pre-filled form to take to your doctor. The Office of Hearing Services can provide you with all necessary information about the Government program as well as a list of providers in your local area. www.hearingservices.gov.au **1800 500 726** (or for users of TTY 1800 500 496).

ELIGIBILITY

Australian Citizens and Permanent Residents 21 years or older and in receipt of:

- a Pensioner Concession Card;
- receiving Sickness Allowance from Centrelink;
- the holder of a Gold Repatriation Health Card (DVA) issued for all conditions;
- the holder of a White Repatriation Health Card (DVA) issued for conditions that include hearing loss;
- a dependent of a person in one of the above categories;
- a member of the Australian Defence Force; or
- undergoing an Australian Government funded vocational rehabilitation service and you are referred by your service provider.

UNDERSTAND TOP-UP PROVISIONS – in some cases the type and degree of your hearing loss will determine the type of aid which would be suitable for you. Sometimes you will have a choice. Under the Federal Government's procedures for eligible people, the provider of your choice will be required to explain to you exactly what aids are available to suit your needs under the voucher provided to you. The full cost of an appropriate aid or aids plus the hearing testing and follow-up assistance will be covered by your voucher. Should you wish to select a different aid of your choice, you can now pay a 'top-up' amount in addition to the free voucher. Be sure you have ALL aids explained to you and that you really will benefit from the extra features offered with a 'top-up' charge.

SHHH Australia Inc. is a voluntary, non-profit educational organisation dedicated to helping Australians with a hearing loss and whose primary method of communication is through speech. Their aim is to assist each hearing impaired person to make informed decisions about their own best alternatives for their hearing management. For assistance, referral and support contact SHHH on (02) 9144 7586

The following information was resourced from their website: www.shhhaust.org

If you are not eligible for government hearing services and must purchase a hearing aid, your options are:

***AUDIOLOGY CLINICS** in hospitals & educational institutions – a list is available from Audiology Aust.

<http://www.audiology.asn.au/public/1/files/Publications/nsw%20services%20March%202014%20final.pdf>

These clinics offer a range of audiology services including supply and fitting of hearing aids. Hearing assessment may be free or there may be a charge. A doctor's referral may be required. Hearing aids will be prescribed and fitted by the audiologist and professional follow-up services, including hearing rehabilitation programs, will be offered.

The cost of one hearing aid can range from approx **\$1000 to \$6000** with new technology and special features increasing this to approx \$6000 per aid. The important point to remember is that the most suitable hearing aid for you is the one which technically meets your hearing needs and with features which are useful in your lifestyle.

Concord Hospital Audiology Clinic, Hospital Rd, Concord.

Hearing assessment can be done and with a doctor's referral, this will be bulk billed.

Phone (02) 9767 6900

St Vincents Hearing and Balance Centre, Darlinghurst. Bulk billed for pensioners with a doctor's referral.

Phone (02) 8382 3323

Macquarie University Speech & Hearing Clinic, Grd Floor -16 University Ave, Macquarie University.

Hearing assessment can be done and with a doctor's referral, bulk billed. Phone (02) 9850 2900.

*AUDIOLOGY DEPARTMENTS IN MAJOR PUBLIC HOSPITALS

Hearing tests are available to all adults, regardless of income. Clients are usually limited to those living in the area served by each hospital but some hospitals have no restriction.

Some hospitals may require a doctor's referral.

There is usually no charge for a hearing assessment carried out in a public hospital. The exception is when the assessment is related to a claim for compensation for loss of hearing. In this case, the service is not covered by Medicare and a charge will be made.

Hearing aids are generally not available through hospital audiology departments, but there are exceptions – check with the hospital.

Sydney Metropolitan Hospitals

Concord Hospital Hospital Rd, Concord **(02) 9767 6900**

Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai Area Health Service, 91 Burdett Street, Hornsby, 2077 **(02) 9477 9347**

Neuro-Audiology Clinic, Liverpool Hospital. Goulburn & Elizabeth Sts, Liverpool **(02) 9828 3646**

Mona Vale Hospital. Coronation St, Mona Vale **(02) 9998 0387**

Prince of Wales Hospital. High St, Randwick **(02) 9382 2271**

Royal North Shore Hospital. Pacific Hwy, St Leonards **(02) 9926 7080**

Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Hearing & Balance Clinic. Missenden Road, Camperdown **(02) 9515 8300**

St Vincents Hospital. Victoria Rd, Darlinghurst **(02) 8382 3323**

Westmead Hospital. Darcy Rd, Westmead **(02) 9845 7479**

New Children's Hospital. Hawkesbury Rd & Hainsworth St, Westmead **(02) 9845 2788**

In country areas, enquire at your nearest large public hospital.

For more information:

Office of Hearing Services www.hearingservices.gov.au

1800 500 726 email: hearing@health.gov.au

SHHH www.shhhaust.org Self Help for Hard of Hearing People

phone and TTY: (02) 9144 7586 email: shhh@netspace.net.au

*A Teletypewriter service for people who are hearing and vision impaired is available on freecall **1800 810 586.***