

The Review Secretariat  
Review – Medicare Card Accessibility  
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07 September 2017

To Whom It May Concern

The Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) would like to thank the review panel for providing the opportunity for our organisation to make a contribution to the review into Medicare Card Accessibility.

As you are aware, our Chief Executive Officer Mrs Peta Rutherford attended a face to face interview with the Review Panel on 1 September 2017. The following are a summary of suggestions discussed at the interview for consideration by the panel:

- Public awareness campaign on the sensitivity of a person’s Medicare number.
  - Linking a pin number of the card may assist in creating an awareness of the importance of a Medicare number.
- Awareness campaign with health care providers and practice staff to require patients to present their Medicare card each time they visit the doctor. In the interview discussions, it was highlighted that a large number of enquiries are generated by known patients who have provided their Medicare number previously to a health service, but for a number of reasons individuals will have been issued a new card, and after a short grace period, if the old issue number card is used for a claim it will be rejected. The provider then lodges an enquiry to access the correct number and then will resubmit the claim.
  - For consideration - remove the issue number requirement and expiry date on Medicare cards for Australian citizens & who live in Australia – this would significantly decrease the number of rejections and enquiries.
- Additional security requirements for providers accessing the provider information telephone line such as documented authorized person on the practitioner’s provider number profile who is allowed to make calls on behalf of the provider, or a nominated pin number, which has to be confirmed, by the person making the phone call on behalf of the provider.
- Remove the online service to access up to 500 Medicare numbers in one day. This could be limited to 500 in thirty days to allow for hospitals to download numbers.
- Deactivating PRODA accounts for providers where it has not been used, RDAA will only support, if the reactivation process is streamlined and not a full “new application”. The streamlined process could apply in situations where the provider has been proactive and notified the department of their intention to take extended leave and therefore won’t be active on the system for a period of time.
- RDAA in principle supports transitioning providers to the PRODA system, however this should not occur until the system capability and capacity issues have been addressed.

If you have any further questions or require additional information please contact Mrs Peta Rutherford Chief Executive Officer

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr Ewen McPhee', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Dr Ewen McPhee  
President  
Rural Doctors Association of Australia