

Healthcare Identifiers Service

Annual Report 2024–25



Australian Government



Services
Australia



Acknowledgement of Country

Services Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live on. We pay our respects to all Elders, past and present, of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations.



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Chief Executive Officer's introduction



As Chief Executive Officer of Services Australia and Chief Executive Medicare, I'm pleased to share a summary of the 2024–25 performance of the Healthcare Identifiers Service (HI Service).

The HI Service is fundamental to the success of healthcare interoperability in Australia and the Government's agenda to enable person-centred and digitally connected healthcare models. It supports safe, secure, and efficient care, with an ecosystem of connected providers conveniently and seamlessly sharing high-quality patient data.

Services Australia works in partnership with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and the Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA) to deliver improvements. This is in keeping with the ADHA's National Healthcare Interoperability Plan and National Healthcare Identifiers Roadmap 2023–2028.

There was continued growth in 2024–25 in active identifiers and increased connections. As part of health modernisation by the Australian Government, we continued to prepare for the expansion of healthcare identifiers across the health, aged care and disability sectors.

Through strong engagement and collaboration with our partners, Services Australia has undertaken important groundwork and activity in preparation for the proposed legislation amendments to the *Healthcare Identifiers Act 2010*.

I'd like to thank our partners who collaborate with us on modernising our service, and all HI Service staff who continue to provide simple and helpful services for our digital health customers.

In accordance with requirements under the *Healthcare Identifiers Act 2010*, I present the 2024–25 HI Service Annual Report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Hazlehurst', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Hazlehurst

Chief Executive Medicare
Chief Executive Officer Services Australia



Introduction

Services Australia administers the Healthcare Identifiers Service (HI Service) on behalf of the Australian Government and state and territory governments. We deliver it under an agreement with the Australian Digital Health Agency (ADHA).

The *Healthcare Identifiers Act 2010* (HI Act) and Healthcare Identifiers Regulations 2020 set the framework and rules for the HI Service.

This annual report captures the details of our activities, finances and operations for 2024–25.

About the HI Service

The HI Service is a national system for identifying people, healthcare providers and healthcare organisations. It's a foundational service for digital health in Australia and ensures health systems match information with the right patient and provider at the point of care. The best health systems in the world, often use a single, national system for identifying individuals, healthcare providers, and organisations, enabling efficient and accurate data management and care coordination. The HI Service provides that identifier for Australia.

The HI Service assigns people, healthcare providers and healthcare organisations a unique 16-digit number. This allows electronic systems across the national healthcare system to identify them correctly.

People are assigned a healthcare identifier when they enrol in Medicare. People who aren't eligible for Medicare can register for a healthcare identifier online or submit a paper form.

Information linked to a healthcare identifier is limited to demographic details such as name, date of birth and gender. The identifier doesn't contain healthcare information.

Healthcare providers are assigned a healthcare identifier either by:

- 1 the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) on behalf of the HI Service
- 2 applying directly to the HI Service if they're not registered by one of the national boards supported by Ahpra.

Healthcare organisations can request a healthcare identifier by applying directly to the HI Service.

Our responsibilities as the HI Service operator

As the HI Service operator our responsibilities are to:

- assign healthcare identifiers to people, healthcare providers and healthcare organisations
- assist people who aren't eligible for Medicare to link and use the Individual Healthcare Identifier (IHI) Service in myGov
- work with Ahpra to maintain a single, complete record of provider healthcare identifiers
- administer secure processes for sharing healthcare identifiers with healthcare providers, healthcare organisations and contracted service providers
- disclose healthcare identifiers to contracted service providers that help manage health information for healthcare organisations
- disclose healthcare identifiers to healthcare providers and healthcare organisations
- keep a log of every time a healthcare identifier is accessed or retrieved
- maintain the Healthcare Provider Directory (HPD)
- share information with key stakeholders about the HI Service
- provide ADHA with reports about the finances and operations of the HI Service
- supply ADHA with data and analytical information to help identify areas for service improvement for our users.

The year in review

Activities and improvements

The HI Service provides the common identifiers needed to link health information, programs and services for customers, their healthcare providers and healthcare organisations.

During 2024–25, Services Australia focused on activities and improvements to the HI Service that will support and underpin a digitally connected healthcare ecosystem. We have continued to prepare for the expanded use of healthcare identifiers across healthcare programs and services, which will include aged care, disability and healthcare administration.



The HI Service supports initiatives outlined in strategic plans, reports and projects. These include:

- 1 National Healthcare Interoperability Plan
- 2 Digital Health Blueprint 2023–2033 and associated Action Plan
- 3 National Digital Health Strategy 2023–2028 and associated Delivery Roadmap
- 4 National Healthcare Identifiers Roadmap 2023–2028
- 5 Australia's Primary Health Care 10 Year Plan
- 6 Strengthening Medicare Taskforce Report.

Services Australia has been working in partnership with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (the Department) and ADHA on a range of short and long-term activities to support the Government's agenda to enable person-centred and digitally connected healthcare models for all Australians.

In 2024–25, these activities included:

 contributing to the Department's Healthcare Identifiers Framework Project.

The project aims to put in place amendments to the HI Act and related policies to enable expanded use of healthcare identifiers across health, aged care and disability sectors.

 implementing deliverables under the ADHA's National Healthcare Interoperability Plan.

The Plan outlines activities to update policies, systems and education material that underpin use of healthcare identifiers and aligns with the Healthcare Identifiers Framework Project.

 participating in the Council for Connected Care led by ADHA.

33 leaders in digital health across federal and state government and peak bodies come together to facilitate, promote and support the digital health agenda. For more information, go to digitalhealth.gov.au.

 delivering initiatives in preparation for proposed legislation amendments to the Healthcare Identifiers Act 2010 anticipated in 2025-26:

- HI Service – New Entity Types Project. This will allow the following 2 new entity types to register in the HI Service:
 - Healthcare Support Service Providers (HSPs) – organisations that provide care and support to people, for example, under the National Disability Insurance Scheme or My Aged Care. While these services aren't 'healthcare', an individual's health may rely on receiving these services.
 - Healthcare Administration Entities (HAEs) – entities such as the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, Cancer Australia and state health departments that manage patient data quality and use data to inform new and existing policies/funding of services.
- Streamlined Healthcare Provider Identifier-Individual (HPI-I) registration project. This streamlines the registration process for allied health professionals by allowing eligible allied health professional associations to register for and manage HPI-Is on behalf of their members

 undertaking discovery work to adopt Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR) for HI Service. This included extensive engagement with stakeholders across the Department, ADHA, Services Australia and industry to assess the potential transition from the existing Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) to FHIR, and recommended options for implementation.

 supporting the Department to deliver My Aged Care and My Health Record integration.

Services Australia has participated in stakeholder engagement sessions with various government departments, including state jurisdictions and health professional associations, to:

-  identify barriers in using healthcare identifiers under the existing legislation
-  work through issues and determine possible solutions.

During 2024–25, Services Australia implemented changes to support the operation of the HI Service by:

-  updating the HI Service system to allow healthcare providers to improve healthcare identifier match rates, specifically targeting people from remote and rural communities
-  continuing to support the life event of birth of a child for earlier connectivity to digital health services.

Assignment of healthcare identifiers

The HI Act defines 3 types of healthcare identifiers:

- 1** Individual Healthcare Identifier (IHI) – for healthcare recipients
- 2** Healthcare Provider Identifier–Individual (HPI-I)
– for individual healthcare providers
- 3** Healthcare Provider Identifier–Organisation (HPI-O)
– for healthcare organisations.

Organisations with an HPI-O can create a hierarchy or network of HPI-Os according to their requirements. For example, multiple specialised business areas in a healthcare organisation.

There was continued growth in active identifiers and increased connections using the HI Service in 2024–25. During the year we:



assigned **669,051** healthcare identifiers to people



collected or assigned **76,839** healthcare identifiers for healthcare providers



assigned **2,893** healthcare identifiers to healthcare organisations



assigned **15** registration numbers to contracted service providers



published **378** entries in the HPD for consenting healthcare providers



published **2,683** entries in the HPD for healthcare organisations



responded to **21,248** enquiries from people and healthcare providers. Enquiries included requests for healthcare identifiers and questions about registering with the HI Service.

Table 1: Number of identifiers assigned

Identifiers	2023–25	2024–25	% change since 2023–24	1 July 2010 to 30 June 2025	Active 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2025
Assigned IHIs	619,070	669,051	7.76%	32,894,956	30,327,177
Assigned HPI-Is	59,674	76,839	28.76%	1,222,046	994,507
Assigned HPI-Os	3,573	2,893	-19.03%	34,146	32,454

Refer to Table 2 for the change in assigned identifiers for people who aren't eligible for Medicare.

Table 2: Number of IHIs assigned to people who aren't eligible for Medicare

IHIs	2023–24	2024–25	% change since 2023–24	1 July 2010 to 30 June 2025
Assigned IHIs	109,995	145,013	27.64%	1,223,751

This is a subset of the number of identifiers assigned in Table 1.

Disclosure of healthcare identifiers for authorised purposes

Under the HI Act, we're authorised to disclose healthcare identifiers to:

- healthcare providers to communicate and manage patient information as part of their healthcare
- people who want to know their own healthcare identifier
- registration authorities to assign healthcare identifiers to their registrants
- entities that issue security credentials to authenticate a provider's identity in electronic transmissions
- the My Health Record System Operator for the My Health Record system
- registers such as the Chronic Wound Consumables Scheme, Australian Immunisation Register and Active Script List.

Disclosure of healthcare identifiers for individuals

Registered healthcare providers and healthcare organisations access their patient's IHI when their health system software interacts with the HI Service. This interaction occurs using appropriate software and approved authentication technology through an authorised web service channel.

People can also access their own IHI:

- by contacting Services Australia
- through their Medicare Online Account in myGov or the myGov app for those enrolled in Medicare
- using the IHI Service in myGov for people not eligible for Medicare.

Each time the HI Service discloses an IHI, it counts as a disclosure under the HI Act. A healthcare provider may search for their patient's IHI each time they have an appointment. Each search counts as a disclosure.

Table 3: Number of IHIs disclosed

IHI disclosures	2023–24	2024–25	% change since 2023–24
IHIs disclosed by telephone and service centres	2,101	2,894	37.74%
IHIs disclosed through web services	719,519,737*	901,154,347	25.24%

*Revised data for IHIs disclosed through web services for 2023–24 provided.

Disclosure of healthcare identifiers for healthcare providers and organisations

In 2024–25, we disclosed **837,103** HPI-Is and HPI-Os in accordance with our obligations under the HI Act. We made the disclosures to entities that authenticate healthcare providers and organisations in digital health transmissions.

Table 4: Number of HPI-Is and HPI-Os disclosed

HPI-I and HPI-O disclosures	2023–24	2024–25	% change since 2023–24
HPI-Is and HPI-Os disclosed via web services	1,233,091	837,103	-32.11%

Provision of Healthcare Provider Directory

Healthcare providers and healthcare organisations use the HPD to access information about each other.

During 2024–25, the number of published healthcare provider and organisation details increased by **3,061**. This brought the total number of entries published since 1 July 2010 to **51,612**.

Policies, processes and systems used to operate the HI Service

The HI Service operates with well-defined policies, procedures, processes and systems.

Policies and processes

HI Service operational policies and procedures are available for staff who manage enquiries from people and healthcare providers. We review these documents every 6 months or when changes are required, whichever occurs first.

Healthcare identifier information systems

We maintain systems that contain:

- IHI information – demographic details and addresses
- HPI-I information – demographic details, contact details and field of practice
- HPI-O information – organisation names, contact details and services provided. We also capture demographic details of the responsible officer and organisation maintenance officer where applicable.
- HPI-O information – organisation names, contact details and services provided. We also capture demographic details of the responsible officer and organisation maintenance officer where applicable.
- No health information is stored in the HI Service.

Managing business continuity plans

We conduct annual business continuity and disaster recovery planning as part of our program assurance responsibilities. During 2024–25, we reviewed and adapted our plans to prioritise our critical functions.

Interactions with software developers and contracted service providers

Throughout 2024–25, we continued to interact with software developers and contracted service providers.

Software developers

Software developers build practice management software and patient administration systems for healthcare providers. We support them in developing software that's compatible with the HI Service.

In 2024–25, **79** software developers registered to build HI Service compatible software.

There's information for software developers on our website, go to [**servicesaustralia.gov.au/hiservicedev**](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/hiservicedev)

Contracted service providers

Healthcare organisations can engage ICT services to communicate and manage health information.

These ICT services register with us as contracted service providers (CSP). Once registered, a healthcare organisation can link to the CSP in the HI Service. This allows the CSP to access the HI Service on behalf of the healthcare organisation.

In 2024–25, **15** CSPs were registered.

Service level results

The HI Service performance is measured against service levels agreed between Services Australia and the ADHA.

Table 5: Service levels and results 2024–25

Service level description	Target	Result
System availability	≥ 99.5%	99.98%
System responsiveness – response times for external user web services do not exceed a 4 second average	≥ 99.0%	99.97%
Call centre responsiveness – customer average speed of answer in < 7 minutes	≥ 80%	71.43%
Call centre responsiveness – provider average speed of answer in < 2 minutes	≥ 80%	72.85%
Online service request – no staff intervention required, and successful validation requests processed within <5 minutes	≥ 95%	99.88%
Online service request – staff intervention with request resolved within 5 business days from submission	≥ 95%	94.16%
Paper form processing – processed within 10 business days of completed application	≥ 95%	98.94%
Outbound correspondence – notification dispatched within 10 business days from receipt of a completed application	≥ 95%	98.94%
Complaints – acknowledged within 5 business days of complaint made	≥ 85 out of 100	100%
Complaints – actioned and finalised with 30 calendar days of complaint received	≥ 85 out of 100	100%

Service level description	Target	Result
System incident management – resolved within timeframe applicable to the severity level)	≥ 80%	
• Priority 1 (response: 30 minutes, resolution: < 4 hours)		100%
• Priority 2 (response: 30 minutes, resolution < 1 business day)		100%
• Priority 3 (response: 1 business day, resolution < 7 business days)		100%
• Priority 4 (response: 1 business day, resolution < 20 business days)		100%
Online IHI registration for eligible non-Medicare individuals through the IHI myGov Member Service.	≥ 80%	97.11%

During January to March, many staff were reassigned to support the urgent delivery of disaster payments. This reassignment of duties directly impacted some service levels across the HI Service.

The government continues to invest in the agency to maintain a customer service workforce to deliver accurate and timely services and payments to Australians. This is highlighted by the significantly improved performance across agency services compared to the 2023–24 financial year. We have continued to upskill staff in these critical services which has resulted in decreased call wait times for customers and providers in the second half of the financial year.

Improved information to support the HI Service

We continued communication activities across government and the healthcare industry throughout 2024–25 to support the HI Service. We simplified the language in HI Service consumer forms to better help applicants to understand and complete their applications. Changes to the Healthcare Identifier Service included the gender value of non-binary (X) and Mx as a title.

We reviewed provider letters and forms and made these changes, to support a digital health service:

- enabled digital upload through Health Professional Online Services (HPOS)
- decommissioned 5 paper forms that are now available in HPOS
- updated several provider letters.

We conducted research to examine and develop options and recommendations for the potential adoption of the FHIR standards. This study aims to facilitate HI Service interoperability in accordance with the Australian Government strategic agenda.

We plan to use digital technologies to:

- create a foundation for a connected care environment
- improve patient outcomes
- enhance access to care.



Operating statement

The operating statement for 2024–25 details the operating activities for the HI Service.

Table 6: HI Service operating statement 2024–25

Expenditure	2024–25 Total \$'000
HI Service Program management	
Workforce	7,259.4
HI Service Delivery	
Workforce	473.4
Information Technology	
Workforce	5,144.7
Computer hardware and software	648.7
Sub-total	5,793.3
Total expenditure	13,526.2



Security, privacy and confidentiality

The *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) (the Privacy Act) regulates the way Services Australia collects, handles and discloses personal information. We comply with the secrecy provisions in the legislation governing the programs we deliver.

We have strict controls and policies in place for the access and disclosure of personal information. We apply appropriate penalties for unauthorised access.

Online security

The HI Service uses online authentication systems to protect the security and privacy of customer information. This includes information transmitted between the HI Service, healthcare providers and the My Health Record system. The HI Service uses the following authentication systems:

- PRODA – a 2-step online authentication system used by providers to securely access government online services.
- PKI – a set of procedures and technology that provides security and confidentiality for electronic business.

Privacy management procedures

We adhere to policies and procedures to protect all personal information. This includes:

- handling personal information in accordance with the Privacy Act obligations
- requiring that all staff complete privacy training and a Declaration for handling personal information on commencement with the agency and annually thereafter
- ensuring all staff are aware of and adhere to our Operational Privacy Policy
- maintaining and regularly reviewing the agency's Privacy Incident and Data Breach Response Plan
- investigating all reported privacy incidents and suspected data breaches, including notification to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) where required
- maintaining, implementing and annually updating our Privacy Management plan, which supports ongoing compliance with the agency's privacy obligations
- undertaking Privacy Threshold Assessments for all new projects that affect handling personal information
- Privacy Impact Assessments where required for new or changed initiatives involving high privacy risk.

The HI Act also imposes restrictions on the collection, use or disclosure of healthcare identifiers and identifying information. It's an offence for a person or organisation to collect, use or disclose certain healthcare identifiers or identifying information unless authorised by the HI Act or other legislation.

A breach of the HI Act relating to a person is a breach of the Privacy Act. Individuals can make a complaint about possible privacy breaches to the OAIC. They can also contact their healthcare provider or ask the OAIC to investigate.

The agency works with the OAIC to investigate complaints referred to the agency. We take appropriate action to remediate confirmed privacy breaches and resolve complaints where possible. The OAIC has powers to investigate an act or practice that might breach the Privacy Act. The Privacy Commissioner can make a determination on complaints where conciliation has not resolved the matter, which can include declarations the Commissioner considers appropriate.

Dealing with data breaches

Under the Notifiable Data Breaches (NDB) Scheme, in Chapter IIIC of the Privacy Act, an entity must notify the OAIC and affected individuals when there is unauthorised access to, disclosure or loss of information, which is likely to result in serious harm to a person whose personal information was affected.

There are additional notification requirements that apply to system operators and registered repository operators under the *My Health Records Act 2012* (MHR Act), which sit alongside the NDB scheme. Under s.75 of the MHR Act, the agency must report any data breaches to both the OAIC and ADHA as the My Health Record System Operator.

The HI Service keeps a full audit of all system interactions for use in investigations if required.

The HI Service did not report any NDBs in 2024–25.

Audits and reviews

There were no audits or reviews of the HI Service during 2024–25.

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