



Health Care

Psychology Services – Information for the Veteran Community

Overview

This Factsheet describes how you can access psychology services.

What does a psychologist do?

Psychologists help prevent, assess, diagnose and treat a wide range of emotional and behavioural problems. Psychologists treat attitudes and behaviours that interfere with the normal functioning of daily life. These can range from minor interpersonal problems in communicating with others to more severe conditions such as depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Psychologists provide a range of psychological therapy and strategies such as:

- education to better understand the causes and effects of mental health disorders
- cognitive-behavioural therapy which helps to change negative patterns of thinking and behaviour
- trauma focussed therapy to assist people with PTSD
- relaxation strategies
- interpersonal therapy

Who is eligible?

If you have a Repatriation Health Card – For All Conditions (*Gold*) the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) will pay for your psychology services, upon referral, to meet a clinical need.

If you have a Repatriation Health Card – For Specific Conditions (*White*) DVA will pay for psychology services, upon referral, for the treatment of a specific condition. The treatment must meet a clinical need and the condition must be:

- an 'accepted' disability, i.e. an injury or disease accepted by the Repatriation Commission as caused by war or service; *or*
- malignant cancer (neoplasia) whether war-caused or not; *or*
- pulmonary tuberculosis whether war-caused or not; *or*
- PTSD whether war-caused or not; *or*
- anxiety and/or depression whether war-caused or not.

In some circumstances, DVA will pay for psychology services for White Card holders where there is no clear link to an accepted disability (e.g. pain management following surgery). In these cases, DVA will need to be contacted before treatment commences.

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Note: Allied veterans are eligible for treatment of war caused disabilities accepted by the entitled person's home country. Please refer to Factsheet HSV62 for specific information on the services available.

How do I access this service?

You must be referred to a psychologist who is currently registered with Department of Human Services under the Medicare Scheme. The referral must come from one of the following professionals:

- Local Medical Officer (LMO);
- General Practitioner;
- medical specialist;
- hospital discharge planner;
- psychologist with a current referral who is transferring you to another Medicare Australia registered psychologist; or
- approved counsellor from the VVCS - Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS).

A referral remains active for 12 months from the date of referral.

You may refer yourself directly to the VVCS. You do not need a DVA Gold or White Card for VVCS services. You can contact VVCS by phoning **1800 011 046**.

How many services can I have?

Your psychologist will determine the type, number and frequency of services you require according to your clinical need.

Do I need to pay?

No. Your psychologist will bill DVA direct for any care provided to you. If you are billed, do not pay the account and advise DVA immediately.

Can I choose to be treated as a Medicare or private patient?

Yes, you can choose to be treated as a Medicare or private patient. However if you take this option, DVA will not pay for any services that have been paid in part or full by Medicare, private health insurance or a third party compensation benefit.

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On your first visit

The following table shows what happens on your first visit to a psychologist in private practice. Only Stage 1 applies to VVCS referrals:

Stage	Description
1	The psychologist: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• assesses your psychological needs; and• prepares a written care plan and discusses it with you.
2	Your psychologist may ask you to sign a DVA service voucher at the completion of treatment at each visit. Before you sign, please check that the service voucher shows your name, file number, date of treatment and item number. Note: If you are unable to sign, a member of your family or the psychologist may sign it on your behalf. If you have a <i>White Card</i> the service voucher should also specify the accepted disability or condition for which you require psychology services. The psychologist will give you a copy of the service voucher.
3	A DVA service voucher is not required if your psychologist is using online claiming.

Other Factsheets

Other Factsheets related to this topic include:

HSV 60 Using the Repatriation Health Card – For All Conditions (Gold)

HSV 61 Repatriation Health Card – For Specific Conditions (White)

HSV 62 Commonwealth and Other Allied Veterans

HSV 67 PTSD Benefits (Psychiatric Treatment / Counselling)

*VCS 01 General information about VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families
Counselling Service*

VCS 06 PTSD General Information

More information

All DVA Factsheets are available from DVA offices, and on the DVA website at www.dva.gov.au.

Health Providers

- Metro 1300 550 457
- Non-metro 1800 550 457

Transport Bookings

- Metro 1300 550 455
- Non-metro 1800 550 455

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**Veterans' Affairs Pharmaceutical
Advisory Centre (VAPAC) 1800 552 580**

General Enquiries (Veterans Only) 133 254

Use a normal landline phone if you can. Mobile phone calls may cost you more.

You can send an email to DVA at: generalenquiries@dva.gov.au

You can get more help from any DVA office.