

Improved Dental and Allied Health (for clients)

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Overview

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) wants its dental and allied health service arrangements to continue meeting the needs of veterans and their families.

For this reason, DVA is making changes to strengthen the quality of allied health care. From October 2019, this will include increasing general practitioner (GP) involvement in treatment. The aim is to make sure that clients get the clinically necessary allied health treatment that they need. As a DVA cardholder, your need for allied health care will be determined by your GP in consultation with you.

The package of changes was announced in the 2018–19 Budget, and has four main elements that will be implemented in a phased approach (see Budget 2018–19 fact sheet — [Improved Dental and Allied Health](#)).

These changes were informed by a review (see [Review of DVA Dental and Allied Health Arrangements — Final Report](#)).

Further information can be found at the following frequently asked questions (FAQs) document:

- [Improved Dental and Allied Health — DVA Cardholders/clients — FAQs \(PDF 470 KB\)](#)
- [Improved Dental and Allied Health — DVA Cardholders/clients — FAQs \(DOCX 25 KB\)](#)

Allied health treatment cycle arrangements now commencing on 1 October 2019

The Government has decided that the treatment cycle changes to allied health referrals will now be introduced on 1 October 2019.

The Government has recognised that DVA clients, allied health providers and general practitioners (GPs) need more support to ensure they understand and are able to manage the requirements of the treatment cycle.

The new 1 October start date will enable DVA to work closely with key stakeholders to address issues that have been identified in recent feedback. DVA will provide detailed information on the treatment cycle arrangements before they start.

Referral arrangements for Totally and Permanently Incapacitated (TPI) clients

During the recent Federal election, the Government announced that the treatment cycle does not apply to physiotherapy or exercise physiology services for DVA clients who have a Totally and Permanently Incapacitated (TPI) Gold Card.

As a result of this commitment, current referral arrangements will continue to apply for TPI clients for exercise physiology or physiotherapy services where these services are clinically necessary. The treatment cycle will apply for TPI clients for referrals to other allied health services.

How does the treatment cycle work?

From 1 October 2019, referrals for DVA clients to allied health services will be valid for up to 12 sessions or a year, whichever ends first.

DVA clients can be referred by their usual GP to an allied health provider if they have a clinical need for allied health treatment. Referrals will be valid for up to 12 sessions or a year — whichever ends first.

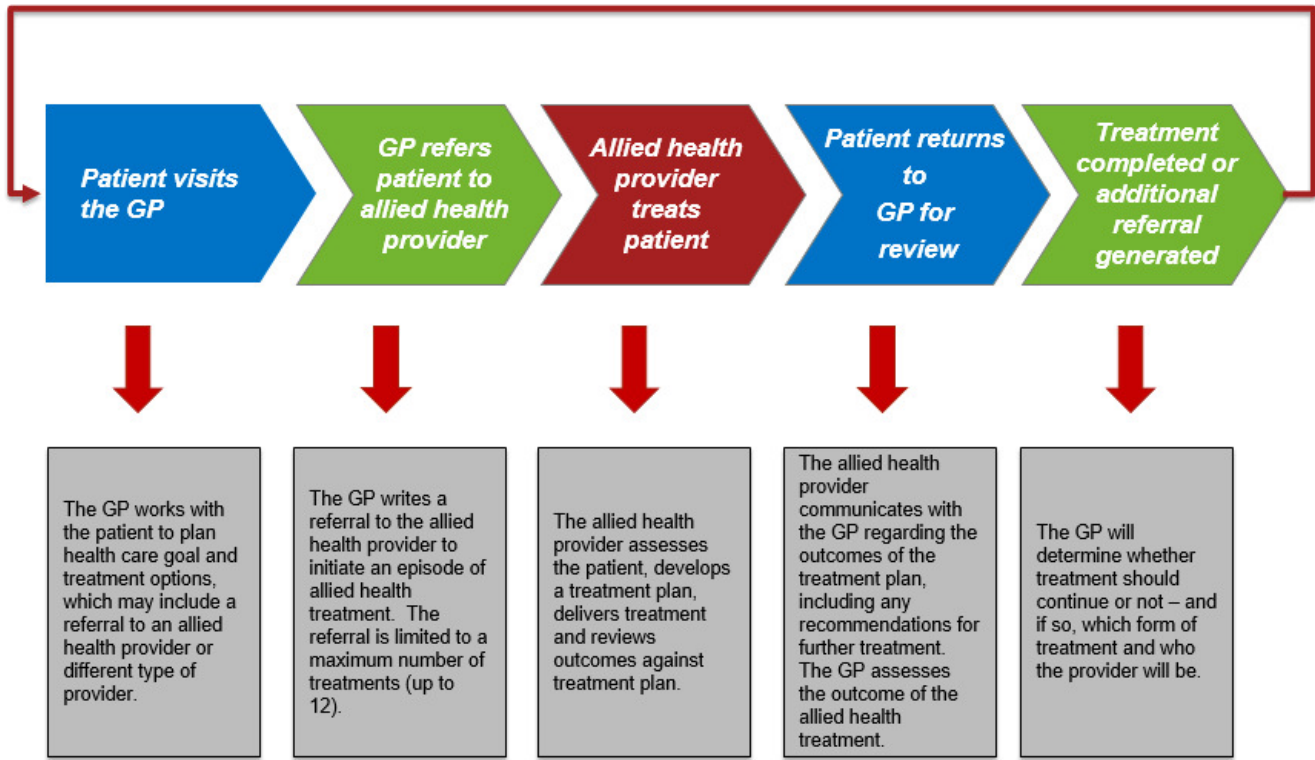
At the beginning of the treatment cycle, the allied health provider will prepare a treatment plan and ask the client about their health goals. At the end of the treatment cycle the allied health provider will send a report to the client's usual GP. The report outlines the treatment provided, the progress of the treatment and recommendations for further treatment if required.

The client's GP will use this report to review the progress of their treatment and assess if further allied health treatment is clinically required, or whether other treatment options are needed. The GP will provide a new referral to the allied health provider if it is needed.

DVA clients will continue to have access to the care they need. Clients can have as many treatment cycles as their GP decides are clinically necessary.

DVA clients can have a separate treatment cycle for each allied health service they require. This includes having treatment cycles for different allied health services at the same time. For example, a client may have services provided by a dietician, podiatrist and physiotherapist at the same time.

Figure 1: Operation of the treatment cycle



Other initiatives

Other initiatives in this package are:

1. Working with selected allied health professions to undertake a trial of new funding approaches for allied health services. The aim is to consider how to improve outcomes for DVA cardholders.
2. An upgrade to the DVA dental and allied health schedules to include new items, to take account of new technologies and techniques.

In addition, DVA will make some technical changes to schedules in consultation with provider associations.

List of dental and allied health services for DVA cardholders

DVA funds a wide range of dental and allied health services for cardholders, which are provided in the following list:

- chiropractic
- clinical psychology
- dental
- dental specialities
- dental prosthetics
- diabetes education
- dietetics
- exercise physiology
- neuropsychology
- occupational therapy
- occupational therapy (mental health)
- optometry
- orthoptics
- osteopathy
- physiotherapy
- podiatry
- psychology
- social work
- social work (mental health)
- speech pathology.