

Your health - know about your rights and who can help you



It can be hard to know who can help when you are sick. It can also be hard to know what your rights are about your health.

If you are a person with intellectual disability or someone who cares for a person with intellectual disability, this guide will help you.

The fact sheets you can link to in this guide are on the Council for Intellectual Disability's website [here](#). If you don't have the internet, ask your support worker or carer to print these fact sheets for you, or go to the library or a friend's house to use the internet.

What does a good doctor look like?

The doctor you go to when you are sick is called a **GP (general practitioner)**. It is important you like your GP and they are a good GP. A good GP will:

- listen to you and not make you rush
- ask you questions and give you time to answer
- let you ask questions
- tell you about health checks that are right for you
- explain what they want to do in words you can understand
- ask before they touch you
- only talk to other people about your health if you say it is okay.

For more information, see the ['Me and my doctor'](#) guide on the internet.

What can you do if you don't like your GP?

You may not like your GP. Perhaps they don't listen to you. They may interrupt or try to rush you. Or they may use words you can't understand and not tell you what they mean.

It's okay not to like your GP. You can change your GP or get help to change your GP. See the ['Finding a new doctor'](#) fact sheet on the internet.

You can also make a complaint about your GP, or ask someone to help you make a complaint. You can complain when your GP has told you to do something like take some pills but not told you why.

There is more information about your rights in [this fact sheet on the internet](#)

When do you go to your GP?

1. You go to your GP when you are sick.
2. You go to your GP when you need a health check.

You should have a health check one time a year, even if you feel well. This is called an **annual health check**. It helps your GP find any sickness early and stop it getting worse. Find out more in [this fact sheet on the internet](#)

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Sometimes your GP will send you to other health professionals who can help you.

- **Some health professionals know a lot about one part of your body like your brain or heart.** These people are called **specialists**.
- **Some health professionals look after certain parts of your body.** For example, your dentist looks after your teeth.

Find out more about health professionals in [this fact sheet on the internet](#)

- **Some health professionals give you tests to check you don't have illnesses** – your GP will tell you if you need these and what they are for.

Find out more about these tests in [this fact sheet on the internet](#)

Health professionals and money

- Some health professionals are **free with Medicare**.
- Some cost money, but **they can give you some money back through Medicare**.
- Some cost money, but **your NDIS plan pays for them**.

Do you have to see a health professional? Ask your GP:

- how much money the health professional charges, or are they free?
- if you can get some or all the money back through Medicare or your NDIS plan
- how much money you have to pay that you cannot get back through Medicare or your NDIS plan.

Chronic health problems

Some people have **chronic health problems**. These last for a long time - six months or more. They include diabetes, epilepsy and asthma.

Ask your GP if you have a chronic health problem.

If you do, you and your GP will make a **health care plan** for you. The plan will show you ways to make your chronic health problem better.

Your GP can change the plan if there is something that works better for you. Your GP will talk to you about any changes. They will only change your plan if you agree.

Find out more about health care plans in [this fact sheet on the internet](#).

More information

- There are more fact sheets [here](#) on the internet.
- Get the [My Health Matters folder](#) on the internet. This helps you communicate with health professionals.
- You and your family can go to free online workshops about making decisions [here](#).
- Health fact sheets for family members and carers are [here](#). They include information about how to help children and older people with intellectual disability.