

National Health Services Directory Introduction

The Australian government's work on digital health initiatives such as My Health Record and secure messaging means the National Health Services Directory (NHSD) will have an increasingly important role in connecting health services and consumers. But what is it and why is it relevant for allied health practitioners?

What is the NHSD?

The National Health Services Directory (NHSD) is a free national directory of health services that provides reliable and consistent information about health and health-related services. The directory has been developed as a joint initiative of all Australian governments as part of Australia's digital health infrastructure. The directory contains over 150,000 service listings across 300 service types, such as: general practices, pharmacies, hospitals, specialists, community health services, and allied health providers. The NHSD is designed to help health professionals identify appropriate services to refer to and to help consumers find health services in their area. The directory can be accessed [via a dedicated website](#) and the [iOS and Android apps](#) as well as through a variety of government, PHN and peak body websites.

What information is held in the NHSD?

The NHSD is designed to provide detailed information about health services, with information appropriate to both consumers and healthcare professionals. In addition to standard information such as location and contact details, opening hours, payment options and appointment and accessibility options, the directory can also provide detailed information about specialised services and offerings such as:

- eligibility and referral criteria for programs and services
- availability of female/male practitioners
- languages spoken by practitioners
- after hours care information
- service delivery methods such as when online, phone, home visit or telehealth services are available.

The NHSD and digital health

The NHSD supports digital health initiatives such as [secure electronic messaging](#), patient referrals, and discharge summaries through the National Endpoint Proxy Service (NEPS). The directory consolidates information from the Healthcare Identifiers Service, Health Provider Directory, National Authentication Service for Health, and Endpoint Location Services. Health services registered with the NHSD and with secure messaging functionality can be easily identified by other health professionals allowing them to send electronic referrals directly. The goal of the service is to provide a national address book for digital health communications.

How can you register for the NHSD?

If you would like to register to have your organisation and service details included on the NHSD, please visit www.nhsd.com.au/register. Once you've entered and submitted your details, you will be contacted by the NHSD team to validate and complete your information. Once your details are entered, changes are normally made by emailing nhsd@healthdirect.org.au and providing details of the changes required. However you can also register your practice for self-authorship, allowing you to keep your practice details up to date, by emailing nhsd@healthdirect.org.au. AHPA is currently working with Healthdirect and AHPA's allied health association member organisations to help their members more easily register for the service.