



The Australian Federation of Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Ex-Servicemen & Women Ltd  
(Incorporated in the ACT)

## **TPI FEDERATION AUSTRALIA**

*“Disabled in our Service - United in our Cause”*



# **Federation President's Report**

## **November 2023**

### **Hearing Aids Update**

Following the announcement by the DVA Secretary that was reported in the last President's Report of September 2023, several Veterans are now having their hearing aids needs met by DVA.

The DVA Secretary, Ms Alison Frame, has advised that a budgetary request will be placed for the 2023/24 Budget which will enable Veterans to obtain their hearing aid needs more readily and without the current barriers and limitations.

Following 9 long years of advocacy by the TPI Federation, I wish to express the thanks of all Veterans to the DVA Secretary for following through with her promise (as advised in the April 2023 President's Report) to address this long-standing Veteran's hearing aids issue, and I also ask that all politicians support the DVA Secretary in her attempt to gain this greatly needed budgetary line approved.

Another source for Veterans to gain the required hearing aids is to ask your Audiologist for a 'second-generation' hearing aid. As with mobile phones, when a new version is received in the market place, the previous top-of-the-range hearing aid becomes known as a 'second-generation' hearing aid. Often the price of the 'second-generation' hearing aid will fall within the monetary limitations for the 'free' hearing aids. Speak to your Audiologists about this.

Should any Veteran continue to have limitations placed on their hearing aid needs, can you please contact the TPI Federation or your local TPI Association.

### **Medicare/Veterans Health Care Card Update**

From 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023, General Practitioners (GPs) will be eligible to receive greater incentives to treat members of the Veteran community who use their Veteran Health Care Card as payment.

The existing Veterans' Access Payment (VAP) for GPs will be tripled, aiming to boost the number of GPs who treat Veteran Health Care Card holders under DVA billing arrangements. The VAP is an incentive payment GPs receive, in addition to the Medicare rebate, when treating Veterans who hold a DVA Gold or White Health Care Card.

The tripling of this payment will help to ensure GPs continue to service Veterans with no out-of-pocket costs. The tripled VAP will apply to general face-to-face consultation greater than six minutes including home visits for people who are homebound, and consultations in residential aged-care facilities.

Additionally, the tripled VAP will apply to video and telephone GP consultations longer than six minutes. For video and telephone consultations longer than 20 minutes, a Veteran Health Care Card holder must also be registered with MyMedicare.

If your Veteran Health Care Card is accepted, you won't be charged a gap fee. Veteran Health Care Card holders are encouraged to confirm that their GP accepts their Veteran Health Care Card prior to booking an appointment.

These changes will see payment for a GP consultation of up to 20 minutes (Level B) increase by more than \$16 in metropolitan areas and more than \$31 in the most remote areas of Australia. Payments apply to general face-to-face and telehealth GP consultations, including home visits for people who are homebound, and consultations in residential aged-care facilities.

To further reduce the burden on medical practitioners, a review is currently underway to simplify and consolidate the Department of Veterans' Affairs forms that medical professionals are required to complete. The first package of the 19 most frequently used forms has been consolidated down to 7, while a process is underway to

significantly reduce the remaining 54 forms by mid-2024. This measure will incentivise GPs to treat the more than 276,000 Veterans and eligible dependents who hold Veteran White or Gold Cards.

<b>From 1 November 2023, GPs who treat Veteran Health Care Card holders will receive increased VAP fees: Modified Monash category</b>	<b>VAP as at 1 July 2023 (pre 1 Nov indexation)</b>	<b>VAP as at 1 November 2023</b>
1 – metropolitan areas	\$8.05	\$24.25
2 – regional centres	\$12.20	\$36.90
3-4 – large and medium rural towns	\$12.95	\$39.20
5 – small rural towns	\$13.80	\$41.65
6 – remote communities	\$14.55	\$43.95
7 – very remote communities	\$15.45	\$46.65

DVA is proud to work with GPs to ensure Veterans have access to health and wellbeing services they need to live well after service. DVA also thanked the thousands of GPs across the country who accept Veteran Health Care Cards for their support and services to our Veteran community.

### **MyService Update**

Under the Modernisation Program, DVA is working to improve the claiming process in MyService. From Sunday 15 October 2023 there will be some new features in MyService. The following improvements will first be applied to Initial Liability claims, but over time there will be changes applied to other claims:

- Prompts to help provide the information needed to support a claim at the time it is submitted.
- Notification through the myGov Inbox will occur when further information about a claim is required by DVA, along with a link to a MyService task that provides all the information needed to provide the additional information.
- An enhanced MyService experience for uploading documents for the claims, as well as viewing details of documents and claims.
- The ability to view information and provide documents via MyService for all claims whether submitted through MyService or other channels, reducing the need to send that information by paper or email. This capability will have a more intuitive document upload experience, including the ability to add any 'Other' documents to the claim up until determination, and view all the documents uploaded in MyService against the claim at any time.

### **Royal Commission Update**

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Sydney Royal Commission hearings that were due to commence on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023, has been held in March 2024 and will be held over 3 weeks. This will be the last public hearing block of the inquiry before the release of the final report in June 2024.

### **Conclusion**

The TPI Federation will continue to assist all TPIs and your families. Should you have any questions, please call or forward enquiries to the email address below.

The TPI Federation wishes you and your family a very merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year.



Ms Pat McCabe OAM  
 Email: [federation@tpifed.org.au](mailto:federation@tpifed.org.au)  
 Ph: 0417 291 546

November 2023

### **Important Dates**

Royal Commission started	–	8 July 2021
Royal Commission Interim Report - Completed	–	11 August 2022
Royal Commission Hearings – Sydney	–	13 March 2024
Royal Commission Private Session – Closed	–	28 April 2023
Royal Commission Submissions – Closed	–	13 October 2023
Royal Commission Final Report	–	17 June 2024

For further information call 1800 331 800