

# **Private Hospital Treatment**

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# Policy

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## 1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for administering eligibility for **private hospital** treatment under the Veterans' Support Act 2014 (the Act). The paper should be read together with the separate papers on:

- *Treatment*
- *Temporary Increase in Payment of Disablement Pension*
- *Travel for Treatment and Rehabilitation*
- *Treatment for Veterans Living Overseas*

## 2. Legislative Reference

2.1 The relevant legislation is the Act, sections 51, 107 to 111, and the Veterans' Support Regulations 2014, regulations 64 to 70.

## 3. Eligibility for Private Hospital Treatment

3.1 **Go to section 3 of separate paper on Treatment.**

## 4. Applications for Private Hospital Treatment

4.1 **Go to section 4 of separate paper on Treatment.**

## 5. Approving Private Hospital Treatment

5.1 **Go to section 5 of separate paper on Treatment**

## 6. Prior Approval of Private Hospital Treatment

6.1 **Go to section 6 of separate paper on Treatment.** Private hospital treatment requires the prior approval of Veterans' Affairs. Approval will be granted on a case by case basis.

## 7. Reimbursement of Private Hospital Treatment Costs

7.1 Veterans' Affairs will not fund private hospital treatment in the case of an injury arising from an accident as this will be covered by ACC.

7.2 In the consideration of any private hospital treatment Veterans' Affairs will consider the criteria set out in sections 107 and 108 of the Act. The expectation will normally be that treatment is provided through the public health

system. A **veteran** should normally be on the waiting list for public hospital treatment before applying to Veterans' Affairs for private hospital treatment.

- 7.3 If necessary Veterans' Affairs may pay for a veteran to see a specialist in another region who can refer to both public and private hospitals.
- 7.4 The Case Manager should check at the outset whether the veteran has private health insurance and if he/she wants to use it. If the veteran has private insurance, the Case Manager should notify the veteran that he/she may choose to go onto the public health system waiting list, but if the DHB waiting list is long (e.g. over 6 months) he/she may wish to consider using private insurance instead.
- 7.5 If a veteran requires treatment for an **accepted disability** and the treatment cannot be arranged within 6 months within the publicly funded health care system, either because the waiting list is too long or the veteran cannot get enough points to get on the waiting list, then the veteran can request funding. If approved, Veterans' Affairs will advise what costs it will contribute towards.
- 7.6 Veterans' Affairs will only approve funding for standard costs of treatment which include:
- surgeon's fees
  - theatre fee
  - anaesthetist's fee
  - medical supplies and consumables which are part of the surgery, e.g. compression stockings
  - x-rays
  - scans
  - accommodation costs (hospital stay)
  - cost of any implant connected with a joint replacement
  - related post-operative care as required, e.g. physiotherapy and home help.
- 7.7 Veterans' Affairs will not reimburse the costs of a single room supplement, television hire, newspapers or other similar services.
- 7.8 See paragraph 6.3 of the separate paper on *Treatment* for policy on emergency treatment.
- 7.9 Where the veteran has, and chooses to use, private insurance, Veterans' Affairs may consider paying the excess on the claim.
- 7.10 If a veteran chooses to use his/her private health insurance to obtain private hospital treatment, but the insurer refuses to pay because the condition is not covered by the policy, Veterans' Affairs will handle the veteran's claim the same way as any other veteran without private health insurance claiming for private hospital treatment.

## 8. Second Opinion

### 8.1 Go to section 22 of separate paper on Treatment.

## **9. Veterans Living Overseas**

**9.1 Go to section 20 of separate paper on Treatment.**

## **10. Veterans Travelling Overseas**

**10.1 Go to section 21 of the separate paper on Treatment**

## **11. Reviews, Appeals and Complaints**

**11.1** If a veteran disagrees about a decision concerning eligibility for an entitlement or service **go to separate policies on Reviews and Appeals**. If a veteran is concerned about Veterans' Affairs' administration of an entitlement or service **go to separate policy on Complaints**.

## **12. Transitional Arrangements**

**12.1 Go to section 24 of the separate paper on Treatment.**

## Glossary

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### **accepted disability** [policy definition]

Means an injury, illness or condition that Veterans' Affairs accepts as being service-related.

### **veteran** [section 7]

Means:

- (a) a member of the armed forces who took part in qualifying operational service at the direction of the New Zealand Government; or
- (b) a person:
  - (i) who has been:
    - (A) appointed as an employee of the Defence Force under section 61A of the Defence Act 1990; or
    - (B) seconded to the Defence Force with the permission of the Chief of Defence Force; and
  - (ii) who took part in qualifying operational service at the direction of the New Zealand Government; or
- (c) a person who, immediately before the commencement of Part 3 of this Act, is eligible for a pension under the following provisions of the War Pensions Act 1954:
  - (i) section 19 (but only if the person was a member of the forces);
  - (ii) section 55 or 56;
  - (iii) Parts 4 and 5