



Provider Connect Australia (PCA) is a service operated by the Australian Digital Health Agency to streamline the process of healthcare provider organisations keeping their business partners up to date with details of the services they provide and the practitioners that provide them.

PCA business partners

Healthcare provider organisations rely on a variety of business partners such as funders, hospitals, health service directories and communications services. Many of these partners need up-to-date details of their clients' healthcare services and can ask their clients to provide these details through PCA.

Healthcare provider organisations can then update multiple partners at once, and those partners receive complete and validated information through PCA that they can incorporate directly into their client databases.

PCA also creates unique identifiers for healthcare services, service delivery locations and practitioners' service delivery roles to reliably identify and link these across the healthcare system.

These unique identifiers complement existing national identifiers for healthcare provider organisations and individuals.

Information disclosure

Healthcare provider organisations choose which of their healthcare services and practitioners (if any) PCA can disclose to which of their business partners. Business partners can choose to receive a subset of the disclosed information from PCA.

For example, if a business partner does not request practitioner details, they will not receive any – even if some of their clients choose to disclose them.

Streamlining client registration

PCA business partners can streamline their client registration process with PCA-enabled online registration forms. These can pre-fill the prospective clients' business and service details from PCA. This saves the client time and reduces the opportunity for errors, making successful completion more likely.

Business partners can reduce or eliminate the time and potential for errors from manually transcribing information into their internal systems. Business partners can redirect their prospective clients from their own website to the PCA portal to authorise the disclosure of their details to the business partner and then update their registration form with those details in real time.

Streamlining updates

Once a healthcare provider organisation has authorised the disclosure of details to their business partners, those business partners receive automatic updates whenever those details are changed.

This significantly reduces the time that healthcare provider organisations spend updating their business partners, ensures that updates are not missed, and reduces transcription errors associated with manual updates.



Business partner benefits

PCA business partners will benefit from:

- lower cost of processing client registrations
- lower cost of processing client updates
- improved client satisfaction due to streamlined registration and updates
- improved timeliness, completeness and accuracy of client data.

Use of received information

PCA business partners provide an Information Use Statement that describes how they will use the information they receive through PCA. This helps overcome reluctance that healthcare provider organisations may have to disclosing information if they are not sure how it will be used.

The healthcare provider organisation accepts the business partner's Information Use Statement when authorising the business partner to receive information. This authorises the business partner to use the information only in the manner described.

Included information

PCA business partners receive the following information from their clients through PCA:

Information about the organisation

- Legal name, registered business name and ABN
- Healthcare Identifiers Service organisation names and HPI-Os where applicable
- Address
- Details of subsidiary organisations may be included where relevant.

Information about a healthcare service provided by the organisation

- Service name
- Service type
- Location where the service is provided, including address and Australia Post and GNAF address identifiers and a unique PCA-issued location identifier

- Contact details
- Opening hours (including exceptions for public holidays etc.)
- Unique PCA-issued healthcare service identifier.

Information about a practitioner providing the healthcare service

- Legal name and preferred name
- Details of registration with Ahpra (where applicable)
- HPI-I (where required for a purpose authorised by the Healthcare Identifiers Act 2010)
- Medicare provider number (where available)
- Type of role performed within the healthcare service
- Unique PCA-issued practitioner role identifier.

For more details refer to *PCA business partner data model*.

Becoming a PCA business partner

The Australian Digital Health Agency will guide you through every step of becoming a PCA business partner, including:

- understanding how PCA can support your business and whether becoming a PCA business partner makes sense for you
- understanding the technical integration options available to you to connect to PCA to receive client data
- executing a PCA business partner participation agreement
- drafting your Information Use Statement that describes how you will use client data received through PCA and listing your partner services in PCA so that clients can disclose their details to you
- receiving data from the SRA and integrating it into your existing systems
- optionally updating your online client registration forms to allow them to be pre-populated with your clients' data received through PCA.

Should I use PCA or the NHSD (or both)?

The National Health Services Directory (NHSD) is operated by Healthdirect Australia on behalf of Commonwealth, state and territory governments¹.

The NHSD will become a PCA business partner and automatically receive updates from healthcare provider organisations about their healthcare services and their practitioners.

Healthcare providers who need to communicate with other healthcare services often ask whether they should become a PCA business partner or use the NHSD (or both).

You may wish to use the NHSD if:

- ✓ You need to find healthcare services to communicate with or refer to
- ✓ You do not have a direct business relationship with those healthcare services
- ✓ You need the widest available coverage of healthcare services

Large healthcare providers that have direct relationships with many local healthcare services may wish to use both PCA and the NHSD.

You may wish to become a PCA business partner if:

- ✓ You maintain direct business relationships with many healthcare services
- ✓ Healthcare services directly register their details with you or have some form of agreement with you
- ✓ You define the terms and conditions of your use of those details

They may use PCA to streamline the direct registration of local healthcare services with them and use the NHSD to find healthcare services across Australia for outbound correspondence and referrals.

1 <https://about.healthdirect.gov.au/nhds>