



Australian Government

Department of Health

Consumer Fact Sheet – How does the Practice Incentives Program (PIP) Quality Improvement Incentive affect the care my GP provides me?

The Australian Government Practice Incentives Program (PIP) supports general practice to invest in ongoing quality improvement activities. These activities aim to improve the care you receive as a patient and your health outcomes.

This consumer fact sheet helps you understand what the PIP Quality Improvement Incentive is, as well as how it relates to the care your general practice clinic provides you.

1. What is the PIP Quality Improvement Incentive?

The PIP Quality Improvement Incentive started on 1 August 2019. It is a payment from the Australian Government to general practices that undertake activities to improve the care you receive. General practices use and share de-identified health data they collect to improve their way of working.

This information **does not** include patient's names, addresses or other identifying information.

Quality improvement activities in a general practice could be:

- Improving the health data they collect to better understand your care and service needs.
- Identifying where there are opportunities for better prevention.
- Planning how many doctors and nurses need to be on duty based on the practice's health data.

2. What does this mean for me, as a patient?

Your GP needs to use health data to understand how to improve care for you and your community. Your GP will seek appropriate consent for your de-identified health data to be part of the PIP Quality Improvement Incentive Data Set. It is data about clinical health concerns, treatment and person characteristics, like age and gender. No personal details that can identify you are collected.

Your de-identified health data contributes to a shared community level data set. This helps GPs to better understand what care options work best for people with similar health concerns. This can improve the care you receive as a patient.

3. Who is my data shared with?

Your de-identified health data is part of a community level PIP Quality Improvement Incentive Data Set. This data set is shared with your local Primary Health Network (PHN) and the national data custodian, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

They produce reports to help your GP and other health providers understand how to improve care and services.

Approved researchers and third parties might access the PIP Quality Improvement Incentive Data Set for secondary purposes. For example, a research purpose to compare the care options for people with similar health concerns in different areas. The purpose must be in the interest of improving health outcomes for people.

4. What if I don't want my data to be shared?

That's okay – you can opt out of your health data being part of the PIP Quality Improvement Incentive. Speak to your GP about opting out on your next visit.

5. Why should I share my data?

Your de-identified health data helps your general practice and other health providers improve the services you and your community receive. They may redesign their clinical systems to improve patient outcomes.

The inclusion of your de-identified health data is very important to give an accurate picture of Australian community health needs. There are many examples of shared Australian data; the AIHW hold a number of [health data collections](#).

6. How is my privacy protected with the PIP Quality Improvement Incentive?

All providers and health data analysts in Australia have professional and legal obligations to protect patient information privacy. This includes your general practice, your PHN and the AIHW.

Only de-identified health information leaves your general practice's patient record system. This is a requirement of the PIP Quality Improvement Incentive. Your general practice must also advise you about secondary purpose use of your de-identified data. This might be through a poster in the clinic waiting room or on their website.

The national data custodian, AIHW, manage requests for access to the PIP Quality Improvement Incentive Data Set for secondary purposes. Only trusted requestors who meet privacy protection obligations would gain approval for secondary use.

7. Where can I find more information on the PIP Quality Improvement Incentive?

The Department of Human Services website includes information on the Practice Incentives Program at <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/organisations/health-professionals/services/medicare/practice-incentives-program>

The Department of Health website includes PIP Quality Improvement Incentive guidance at https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/PIP-QI_Incentive_guidance

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners includes information on the secondary use of general practice data and the PIP Quality Improvement Incentive at <https://www.racgp.org.au/running-a-practice/security/managing-practice-information/secondary-use-of-general-practice-data>