



**Australian Government**

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**National Archives of Australia**

**Records Authority**

2018/00061621

**Department of Health**

*Medical and Health Care Access*

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2018



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## **CONTENTS**

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>APPLICATION OF THIS AUTHORITY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>AUTHORISATION</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>MEDICAL &amp; HEALTH CARE ACCESS</b>	<b>7</b>

## INTRODUCTION

The Department of Health (the agency) and the National Archives of Australia have developed this records authority to set out the requirements for keeping or destroying records for the core business area of Medical & Health Care Access. It represents a significant commitment on behalf of the Department of Health to understand, create and manage the records of its activities.

This authority is based on the identification and analysis of the business of the Department of Health. It takes into account the agency's legal and organisational information management requirements, and the interests of stakeholders, the agency and the National Archives.

The authority sets out those records that need to be retained as national archives and specifies the minimum length of time that temporary records need to be kept. This authority gives the Department of Health permission under the *Archives Act 1983*, for the destruction of the temporary records described after the minimum retention period has expired. Retention periods for these temporary records are based on: an assessment of business needs; broader organisational accountability requirements; and community expectations, and are approved by the National Archives on the basis of information provided by the agency.

As changes in circumstances may affect future information management requirements, the periodic review of this authority is recommended. All amendments must be approved by the National Archives.

## APPLICATION OF THIS AUTHORITY

1. This authority is to be used to determine how long records must be kept. Records are matched to the relevant core business and records class in the authority.
  - Where the minimum retention period has expired and the records are not needed for Departmental business they should be destroyed as authorised in this authority.
  - Records that have not reached the minimum retention period must be kept until they do.
  - Records that are identified as 'retain as national archives' are to be transferred to the National Archives for preservation.
2. This authority should be used in conjunction with general records authorities such as:
  - the Administrative Functions Disposal Authority (AFDA) and/or AFDA Express issued by the National Archives to cover business processes and records common to Australian Government agencies; and
  - General Records Authority (31) - Destruction of source or original records after digitisation, conversion or migration (2015).
3. The normal administrative practice (NAP) provision of the *Archives Act 1983* gives agencies permission to destroy certain records without formal authorisation. This usually occurs where records are duplicated, facilitative or for short-term use only. NAP does not replace arrangements agreed to in this authority but can be used as a tool to assist in identifying records for destruction together with an agency's records authority or authorities, and with AFDA and AFDA Express. The National Archives recommends that agencies develop and implement a NAP policy. Advice and guidance on destroying records as a normal administrative practice and on how to develop a NAP policy is available from the National Archives' website at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au).
4. Records that are reasonably likely to be needed as evidence in a current or future judicial proceeding or are subject to a request for access under the *Archives Act 1983*, the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* or any other relevant act must not be destroyed until the action has been completed.
5. Records subject to a disposal freeze must not be destroyed until the freeze has been lifted. Further information about disposal freezes and whether they affect the application of this authority is available from the National Archives website at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au).
6. Where the method of recording information changes (for example from a manual system to a

digital system, or when information is migrated from one system to a new system) this authority can still be applied, providing the records document the same core business. The information must be accessible for the period of time prescribed in this authority. The Department of Health will need to maintain continuing access to the information, including digital information, for the periods prescribed in this records authority or until the information is transferred into the custody of the National Archives.

7. In general, retention requirements indicate a minimum period for retention. The Department of Health may extend minimum retention periods if it considers that there is an administrative need to do so, without further reference to the National Archives. Where the Department of Health believes that its accountability will be substantially compromised because a retention period or periods are not adequate, it should contact the National Archives for review of the retention period.
8. Records coming within 'retain as national archives' classes in this authority have been determined to be part of the archival resources of the Commonwealth under section 3C of the *Archives Act 1983*. The determination of Commonwealth records as archival resources of the Commonwealth obliges agencies to transfer the records to the National Archives when they cease to be current and, in any event, within 15 years of the records coming into existence, under section 27 of the *Archives Act 1983*.
9. Records in the care of agencies should be appropriately stored, managed and preserved. Agencies need to meet this obligation to ensure that the records remain authentic and accessible over time. Under Section 31 of the *Archives Act 1983*, access arrangements are required for records that become available for public access including those records that remain in agency custody.
10. Appropriate arrangements should be made with the National Archives when records are to be transferred into custody. The National Archives accepts for transfer only those records designated as national archives. Records created digitally after 1 January 2016 can be transferred in digital formats only.
11. Advice on how to use this authority is available from the Department of Health information manager. If there are problems with the application of the authority that cannot be resolved, please contact the National Archives.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

For assistance with this authority or for advice on other information management matters, please contact National Archives' [Agency Service Centre](#).

## AUTHORISATION

### RECORDS AUTHORITY 2018/00061621

**Person to whom notice of authorisation is given:**

Ms Glenys Beauchamp PSM  
Secretary  
Department of Health  
GPO Box 9848  
Canberra ACT 2601

**Purpose:**

Authorises arrangements for the disposal of records in accordance with Section 24(2)(b) of the *Archives Act 1983*.

Determines records classed as 'retain as national archives' in this records authority to be part of the archival resources of the Commonwealth under section 3C of the *Archives Act 1983*.

**Application:**

All core business records relating to Medical & Health Care Access.

This authority gives permission for the destruction, retention or transfer to the National Archives of Australia of the records described. This authority will apply only with the consent of the agency currently responsible for the business documented in the records described.

**Authorising Officer**

Teresa Ward  
Assistant Director- General  
National Archives of Australia

**Date of issue:**

17 April 2018

## MEDICAL & HEALTH CARE ACCESS

The core business of developing, facilitating and maintaining public access to medical and health care services, including community, primary and acute care. Includes the delivery of systems and the management of the listing of Medicare services subsidised by the Australian Government (currently the Medicare Benefits Schedule or MBS).

**Core activities** include:

- receiving and providing advice and other forms of information to stakeholders, including through formal submissions and briefing sessions;
- negotiating, establishing and implementing agreements, including joint venture agreements, with other government agencies and non-government organisations;
- managing applications from the public, both Australian and non-Australian citizens, for eligibility for access to medical and health care services;
- developing and managing a classification system to determine the relationship between health care activity and cost of providing a medical service (currently Casemix);
- developing content, approving and delivering industry education and information awareness events, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, workshops and in-house sessions;
- monitoring performance and evaluation of access to medical and health services;
- developing, implementing and reviewing policies, strategies, principles, frameworks, procedures and plans designed to improve access to medical and health care services;
- developing, implementing and reviewing tools and products relating to medical and health care access;
- developing medical and health care access programs, projects and services, including the e-Health initiative;
- developing, maintaining, managing and marketing the listing of Medicare services subsidised by the Australian Government (currently the Medicare Benefits Schedule or MBS) , including administration of applications for items to be included on the schedule; and
- managing reviews of agency decisions, including appeals to higher authorities.

The performance of the core business is supported by **general activities** such as:

- preparing and presenting addresses and speeches;
- planning, conducting or facilitating internal and external audits;
- establishing, managing and participating in internal and external committees, meetings, working groups, leadership groups, forums, panels or other bodies;
- arranging and attending conferences, forums, seminars and workshops;
- managing and responding to complaints and enquiries;
- delegating powers and authorising actions;
- evaluating policies, strategies, principles, plans, programs, tools etc;
- liaising, collaborating and consulting across sectors;
- developing and implementing marketing and promotional campaigns, including advertising and promoting education and information awareness events;
- reporting on medical and health care activities; and
- undertaking research and analysis, including financial forecasting.

Cross references to other Department of Health Records Authorities

*For policies, strategies, programs and services designed to support the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people, use ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HEALTH.*

*For policies, strategies and programs designed to deliver aged and community care services, including assessing and approving individuals to gain access to these services, use AGED CARE.*

*For policies, strategies, programs and services designed to reduce the incidence of or prevent chronic diseases such as arthritis, asthma, cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, use CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION.*

*For policies, strategies, programs and campaigns designed to promote healthy environments and lifestyle behaviours (including healthy ageing), prevent disease through vaccinations, inform the community about lifestyle risk factors, including alcohol, tobacco and substance abuse, and ensure the safety of food, use HEALTH PROMOTION & SAFETY.*

*For medical and health care access services and programs that relate to hearing services, use HEARING SERVICES.*

*For policies, strategies, programs and services designed to address broader social health issues in the community including mental illness, use MENTAL HEALTH.*

*For medical and health care access services and programs that relate to pharmaceutical benefits, use PHARMACEUTICAL BENEFITS AND ACCESS.*

Cross references to AFDA Express

*For media releases, use COMMUNITY RELATIONS and/or GOVERNMENT RELATIONS.*

*For the preparation of budget estimates, budget proposals, cost modelling, and financial transactions, use FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.*

*For advice, briefs and submissions to the portfolio Minister, cabinet submissions and the organisation's participation in formal inquiries, use GOVERNMENT RELATIONS.*

*For development of new legislation and amendments to existing legislation, including amendments to the Quality Agency Standards, use GOVERNMENT RELATIONS and/or STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.*

*For managing legal services, including providing legal advice and litigation activities, use LEGAL SERVICES.*

*For the procurement of goods and services, such as contractors or consultants, use PROCUREMENT.*

*For contributing to the technical design for external electronic health systems, use TECHNOLOGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS.*

Cross references to other General Records Authorities

*For developing and executing contracts under seal or deeds, use CONTRACTS UNDER SEAL/DEEDS (GRA 36).*

*For the management of grants, use GRANT MANAGEMENT (GRA 28).*



## MEDICAL & HEALTH CARE ACCESS

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
62420	<p>Records documenting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development, implementation and review of national or high-level policies, plans, rules, strategies and frameworks relating to medical and health care access. Includes final versions and supporting materials obtained through liaison and consultation with relevant stakeholders;</li> <li>• development, implementation and review of high-level medical and health care access programs, projects and services (eg the e-Health initiative 'My Health Record'). Includes proposal, business case, implementation plan, risk assessment, stakeholder consultation and project outcome report;</li> <li>• development, implementation and review of high-level procedures and guidelines in relation to the core business (eg Guidelines for Patient/Consumer Access to Pathology Test Reports). Includes final versions and supporting materials obtained through liaison and consultation with relevant stakeholders;</li> <li>• development, implementation and review of major products and tools to support medical and health care access (eg Workforce planning tools);</li> <li>• master set of major education program or training course content (eg Emergency Triage Education Toolkit). Includes final versions and associated materials;</li> <li>• management of the listing of Medicare services subsidised by the Australian Government (currently the Medicare Benefits Schedule) Includes submissions/ applications for services to be included on the schedule, recommendation for inclusion, amendment or expansion of services and master versions of the listing, legal and financial advice, and Minutes to the Minister. Also includes records of consultation and approval received from the Office of Legislative Drafting or the Executive Council, correspondence with other agencies, reports, briefs, transcripts and notes for file documenting decisions;</li> <li>• high-level advice received or given to internal or external stakeholders relating to nationally or internationally significant medical or health care access matters. Includes policy advice, the application or interpretation of policy, Medicare utilisation, or amendments to regulations. Also includes final versions of advice, positions papers, opinions, briefings and supporting research;</li> <li>• signed versions of high-level agreements and contracts that: relate to substantial funding agreements or the establishment of major partnerships and cooperative arrangements with other governments, agencies and organisations; are controversial, of public interest or ground-breaking in nature; have substantial implications for the conduct of agency business. Includes Memorandums of Understanding and joint ventures (eg eHealth Memorandum of Understanding);</li> <li>• high-level internal or external, inter-governmental or inter-agency committees, working groups and other bodies where the agency provides the secretariat, is the Australian Government's main representative, or plays a prominent or central role. Includes committees formed to determine the scheduled benefit payable for medical and health care services (eg Medical Services Advisory Committee). Also includes documents establishing the committees, working groups etc, agenda, final</li> </ul>	Retain as national archives

## MEDICAL & HEALTH CARE ACCESS

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	<p>versions of minutes, associated reports, briefing notes and tabled papers;  <i>[For all other committees related to the core business, use class 62422]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high-level national, sector-wide and major internal reviews of the core business (eg Medicare Benefits Schedule Review Taskforce ). Includes recommendations, submissions, stakeholder consultations, supporting research and associated final review reports;</li> <li>• final versions of other national and high-level reports relating to medical and health care access;</li> <li>• appeals made under legislative provisions against a decision or an order made to the Department, to a central arbitration or determining body (eg the Administrative Appeals Tribunal) for a review of decisions made by the Minister regarding matters such as overseas medical treatments and other general issues relating to Medicare issues. Includes correspondence, minutes, briefs, medical-in-confidence records, applications, decisions and medical advice;</li> <li>• development and management of a classification system to determine the relationship between health care activity and cost of providing a medical service (currently the Casemix);</li> <li>• collection, monitoring, interpretation, linkage, review, and comparison of data relating to medical and health care access. Includes Casemix data, mapping documents such as the register of accredited aged care providers, scoping documents, survey responses, statistics, analysis materials, associated final reports, minutes, briefs and correspondence;</li> <li>• findings or outcomes of major research and analysis undertaken or commissioned by the agency in relation to medical and health care access. Includes final research reports, statistical modelling and trend analysis, and supporting research datasets and associated information;</li> </ul> <p><i>[For all other research in relation to medical and health care access, use class 62423]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitoring performance and evaluation of access to medical and health services, includes surveys and associated final reports (eg Second National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing);</li> <li>• development of major marketing, branding and educational campaigns (eg print, radio and television advertisements) supporting medical and health care access policies, programs and products. Includes final versions and supporting materials;</li> <li>• final versions of speeches and addresses presented by the portfolio Minister or senior agency staff in support of the core business;</li> <li>• conference papers delivered by the portfolio Minister or senior agency staff in support of the core business; and</li> <li>• master versions of agency publications produced to support medical and health care access. Includes handbooks, newsletters and information sheets.</li> </ul>	
62421	<p>Records documenting the management of applications from the public, both Australian and non-Australian citizens, for eligibility for access to medical and health care services, programs or treatment, in Australia and overseas. Includes minutes, briefs, correspondence, and eligibility criteria assessment,</p>	<p>Destroy 80 years after last action</p>

## MEDICAL & HEALTH CARE ACCESS

Class no	Description of records	Disposal action
	notification of assessment (ie outcome of application), medical advice and relevant medical records. Also includes reciprocal arrangements with State, Territory and overseas governments and instruments signed by the Minister.	
62422	Records documenting committees relating to the core business where the agency does not provide the Secretariat, is not the Australian Government's main representative and does not play a leading role. Includes documents establishing the committee, agenda, final versions of minutes, associated reports, briefing notes and discussion papers.	Destroy 25 years after last action
62423	Records documenting research carried out in support of medical and health care access programs or activities, other than research covered under class 62420. Includes final research reports, statistical modelling and trend analysis, and supporting research datasets and associated information.	Destroy 15 years after last action
62424	Records documenting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attendance at conferences arranged by other organisations relating to medical and health care access. Includes conference papers, funding papers, speakers' notes, minutes, briefs, correspondence, promotional material, and administration papers;</li> <li>• final versions of minutes and supporting material documenting internal agency meetings; and</li> <li>• risk management planning, including the final version and major drafts of the risk management plans supporting the core business.</li> </ul>	Destroy 10 years after last action
62425	Records documenting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• routine operational administrative tasks supporting the core business; and</li> <li>• medical and health care access activities, other than those covered in classes 62420 to 62424.</li> </ul>	Destroy 10 years after action completed