



## Provider Factsheet - Qualified Practitioners

A Qualified Practitioner (QP) is a person employed by a contracted service provider (provider) to deliver hearing services to eligible clients of the Hearing Services Program (the program).

A QP may be an audiologist or audiometrist, registered with one of the three Practitioner Professional Bodies. The QP must be allocated a QP number in order for the provider to claim reimbursement from the program for the services the QP has provided to program clients.

### QP Numbers

Providers make claims for reimbursement from the program by e-claiming through the Services Australia (SA) claims payment system. A QP number is a unique number to identify the QP delivering each service being claimed.

#### Who is able to be a QP?

A QP must be an audiologist or audiometrist who is:

- in an approved membership category of a participating Practitioner Professional Body (PPB), as defined in the [Hearing Services Program \(Voucher\) Instrument 2019](#), and
- employed, or engaged as a locum, by a contracted service provider.

The qualifications of QPs are monitored regularly by the program and providers must ensure these qualifications are accurate and up to date. Providers are required to certify in the compulsory annual self-assessment that all QPs have current PPB membership certification.

#### How is a QP number allocated?

Providers can request QP numbers for their staff via the Hearing Services Online Portal (portal). The [Quick Reference Guide](#) on the program's website can guide you through this process. Once a QP number is issued by the program, providers must then link that QP to their organisation in the portal in order to commence claiming.

If a practitioner has a QP number from a previous employer, this number will be re-activated once the provider links the QP to their organisation in the portal. If a practitioner has a QP number but has not worked for one of the program's providers for an extended period of time, you may need to contact the program at [hearing@health.gov.au](mailto:hearing@health.gov.au) so we can manually arrange for the practitioner's QP number to be reinstated.

#### Linking or unlinking QPs in the portal

Providers are responsible for linking employed practitioners to their organisation in the portal. A QP can be linked to a provider by a SP Admin or SP Manager portal user. Under the "Qualified Practitioners" section, click on the "Link Practitioner" button, and enter the QP's employment start date. Once a QP has been linked please wait a few days for the data to update before you submit any claims for the QP. To unlink a QP, click on the edit button and add the QP's employment end date. Please note that if you want the QP to have specific roles in the portal, they will need to be assigned a portal user role. Please refer to the [Quick Reference Guide](#) or [Portal User Guide](#) for more detailed guidance.

A QP can be linked to more than one provider, for example a QP may have two or more part time jobs with different providers. Being linked concurrently to several contracts does not affect portal user roles.

You can view all your linked practitioners by clicking on the 'Export' button. This provides easy visibility of the status of all QPs linked to your organisation.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Is a QP Number the same as a Medicare Provider Number?

A QP number is not the same as a Medicare provider number. A QP number is specifically used for claiming in the program using the SA claims payment system. A Medicare provider number is used to claim Medicare service items outside of the program.

Unlike a Medicare provider number, a practitioner's QP number is retained when they change from one provider to another within the program. For Medicare, audiologists need to apply for a new Medicare provider number each time they change employers. Therefore, in the SA claims payment system, a practitioner's current work address is important for Medicare provider numbers, however is not important for the program's QP numbers. (**Tip:** When contacting SA to notify Medicare of a change of working address, please advise that you require the QP number to remain active, as sometimes SA will close both in error).

### Can a QP see clients while waiting for their QP number to be allocated?

QPs are able to provide services from the date the request for a QP number is submitted in the portal. You will be notified as soon as your practitioner's QP number has been issued, so that you can link that QP to your organisation in the portal. We advise for you to wait a few days before you submit batched claims to allow the data to update.

### Does a QP number expire?

A QP number remains allocated to that person, even if they change employers. It is therefore important to end their link to your organisation in the portal when that person leaves your employment.

### Can provisional practitioners obtain a QP number?

Provisional practitioners are not eligible for a QP number. Provisional practitioners may only provide hearing services to program clients under the supervision of a QP. The supervising QP is responsible for those services and their QP number must be used to make the claim for reimbursement.

### I am unable to find my QP's record what should I do?

Sometimes records that are inactive will not be visible to you. We can reinstate a record in these situations. Please email the practitioner's details to [hearing@health.gov.au](mailto:hearing@health.gov.au).

### How do I make changes to a QP number?

**Change in qualification** - If your practitioner's qualification has changed from an audiometrist to an audiologist, you will need to email their new PPB membership certificate to [hearing@health.gov.au](mailto:hearing@health.gov.au). We will then update their QP record in the portal.

**Change of name** – If your practitioner changes their legal name, you will need to email their proof of identity documents (for example a driver's license, a Change of Name certificate or Marriage certificate) to [hearing@health.gov.au](mailto:hearing@health.gov.au). We will then update the practitioner's new name in their portal record.

**Change of address** – When a practitioner commences or leaves your organisation they QP number stays with them. It is your responsibility to keep the practitioner's record accurate by linking or unlinking that practitioner in the portal.