

Obtaining A Medicare Card For Your Newborn Baby

Overview

Services Australia advises that your newborn baby **cannot** be assigned a Medicare number prior to birth.¹



You will **need to enrol** your newborn baby into Medicare immediately following birth.¹ To enrol your newborn baby into Medicare, the critical documentation required is the **Newborn Child Declaration Form** which can be found in the **Parent Pack** provided to you by your midwife, doctor, or the hospital where your baby was born.¹



Connect with your midwife, doctor, or the hospital where your baby is due to be born to ensure the **Parent Pack** is ready and available at birth, so you have access to the **Newborn Child Declaration Form** immediately after your baby is born.



The **back page** of the **Newborn Child Declaration Form** will need to be completed and signed by the **midwife or doctor** present at the birth of your baby.¹



The **completed and signed Newborn Child Declaration Form** needs to be submitted via your **Medicare online account** or the **Express Plus Medicare mobile app**² – see links in the resource section below.



A **digital version** of your newborn baby's Medicare card can be **immediately** obtained using the **Express Plus Medicare mobile app**² – see link in the resource section below.



What if we do not have a Newborn Declaration Form?



1 If your newborn has received a Spinal Muscular Atrophy diagnosis following Newborn Screening, you may not have had a chance to complete the Newborn Declaration Form or may not have it to hand.



2 If you do not have a Newborn Declaration Form, the guidance from Services Australia is to use a **Medicare Enrolment Application Form**.³



3 You can submit the Medicare Enrolment Form with your baby's Birth Certificate via email to the Medicare Enrolment Services (mes@servicesaustralia.gov.au) including Enrolment in the email subject line.⁴



4 Alternatively, you can also enroll your newborn using your baby's Birth Certificate via your **Medicare online account**, or the **Express Plus Medicare mobile app**.⁴



5 Once you have completed the form, you will see your updated digital card straight away by selecting the **My Card** option in the menu.⁵



6 Further instructions can be found here [Medicare online account help – Enrol a baby in Medicare – Services Australia](#).

A Family's Personal Experience

Our journey with Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) began with the birth of our first child, a daughter who lived for 8 months and 22 days. Both my husband and I discovered we were carriers of SMA after our daughter's diagnosis. In the years following our loss, advancements in research and the availability of treatments led us to try for more children. Genetic testing during pregnancy revealed that our third child would also have SMA Type 1.

With the support from our healthcare team, we decided on treatment, which at that time would be administered in Sydney. As early treatment was crucial for our baby's well-being, we made a plan. What we didn't know was that to access treatments reimbursed by the Government or to even make a treatment order, our baby needed a Medicare number.

Despite the urgency of our situation, a Medicare number can only be generated following birth. Initially we were told we could go into a Medicare service centre with the appropriate documents, and one could be created on the spot. However, the service centres are only open Monday to Friday. Our baby was due on a Saturday, and we simply did not have the time to wait until Monday.

Through persistence, we eventually found a faster way – we were told as soon as our baby was born, we needed our doctor to complete the back page of the Newborn Declaration Form and upload it to our account via the Medicare app. Our baby was born 8 days early and on a Friday at 1:20 am. The Newborn

Declaration Form was filled out by our doctor. We took a photo of the back page and uploaded it to our account on the Medicare app. Fifteen minutes later we called Medicare (132 011), answered a few questions and by the end of the call, we had a Medicare number. By 4am, his number and the digital version of our card were with our neurologist and treatment was organized – this was critical as the treatment needed to come from overseas. Twenty-four hours later we were on the way to Sydney and our baby was treated at 5 days old. Our baby boy is now a thriving toddler.

We appreciate every child and circumstance will be different. This was our experience. What we learned from this experience is the importance of the Newborn Declaration Form for enrolling a newborn into Medicare. It also helped to notify Medicare as soon as we had our son's diagnosis so it could be flagged on our account that our newborn would require life-changing treatment following birth and the urgency of creating a Medicare number. While physical submission at a Medicare service centre is an option, the app provided a quicker solution for us.

**A Family,
Queensland.**



Resources

Australian Government, Services Australia – Having a baby
[Having a baby – Services Australia](#)

Express Plus Medicare mobile app
[Express Plus Medicare mobile app – Services Australia](#)

Medicare online account help – Enrol a baby in Medicare
[Medicare online account help – Enrol a baby in Medicare – Services Australia](#)

Australian Government, Department of Health and Aged Care – Pregnancy, Birth & Baby
[Adding your new baby to Medicare | Pregnancy Birth and Baby \(pregnancybirthbaby.org.au\)](#)

Medicare Enrolment Form (MS004)
[Medicare enrolment form \(MS004\) – Services Australia](#)

Medicare general enquires – Services Australia's Medicare general enquires line is available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day – call 132 011
[Medicare general enquiries | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#)

References:

1. [When your baby arrives – Having a baby – Services Australia](#) – accessed June 2024.
2. [Enrolling your baby in Medicare – Medicare – Services Australia](#) – accessed June 2024.
3. [Adding your new baby to Medicare | Pregnancy Birth and Baby \(pregnancybirthbaby.org.au\)](#) – accessed June 2024.
4. [Medicare enrolment form \(MS004\) – Services Australia](#) – accessed June 2024.
5. [Medicare online account help – Enrol a baby in Medicare – Services Australia](#) – accessed June 2024.

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