

FAQs

COVID-19 Partnership Agreements with day and smaller hospitals

1. What does the Commonwealth Government viability for capacity guarantee for private overnight and day hospitals mean?

This is a commitment by the Commonwealth Government to ensure the viability of the private hospital sector. This will cover operating costs including all staff wages for all overnight and day hospitals. Minister Hunt fought hard to ensure that day hospitals were included in this package. This package contributes to your ongoing viability, not profits or loan/debit repayments. This package enables a total private sector response during the period of this pandemic, not dissimilar to Australia's response, in the past, to world wars.

2. How does my hospital ensure that it receives the Commonwealth guarantee?

Your hospital must retain capacity for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and non COVID-19 activities and be set to resume operations at the end of the pandemic. This means that you must retain the workforce for operation of your hospital or for redeployment across the health system in your state or territory. Your hospital must sign the state or territory agreement in order to receive the Commonwealth guarantee.

3. What is the commencement date for the viability payment?

31st March 2020

4. What does the state/territory agreement involve?

Each state and territory is formulating their own agreements for the private hospital sector. These agreements will outline how your hospital may be integrated into the state or territory health system and what activities your hospital may be requested to perform.

5. What are the possible activities my hospital may be requested to perform?

You may not be asked to perform any activities, in which case your operational costs including staff costs, will be covered by the Commonwealth guarantee. There are however, many ways that the Government may ask you to assist in the COVID-19 response such as:-

- additional capacity for public hospital overflow of COVID-19, or general patients, where this is possible
- take on some category 1 surgery where your hospital is suitable, and your hospital due to its size provides a safer environment as there would be less contact with others
- your anaesthetic machines, could be used to ventilate patients, either in other hospitals or at your facility, due to a shortage of ventilators
- your skilled staff may be deployed to where they are needed most
- available beds in recovery rooms etc could provide extra beds as needed
- as a quarantine facility to accommodate cruise, flight covid-19 passengers and others
- become a COVID-19 hospital, smaller facilities unlikely to become hot spots for large contagions
- there may be circumstances where people are reluctant to attend their GP for this year's influenza vaccine, day hospitals could provide this service to the community
- COVID-19 testing station.

6. Will I be paid for the services the State requests?

Yes this will form part of the state or territory contract arrangements and will cover the costs of providing the service required.

7. How does my hospital maintain the viability guarantee?

- Signing the state or territory agreement for your hospital
- Maintain capacity infrastructure – essential supplies, equipment and staff
- Provide financial information to ensure adequate funding for operational costs including staffing.

8. What happens if there is a medical practice attached to my facility?

The viability guarantee and state contracts will only involve the hospital not any medical practice costs.

9. Is it worthwhile my small day hospital signing the state agreement?

Yes definitely as you will then receive the Commonwealth Government viability for capacity guarantee. The state may not use your facility, however you will still benefit from the Commonwealth payment ensuring operational and staff costs are covered.

10. What is the integration of private hospitals into the state system?

Private overnight and day hospitals may be temporarily recruited by the state or territory governments to assist during the COVID-19 pandemic.

11. What should I be providing for my staff at present?

Access the Department of Health resources to provide necessary education to your staff via this link:
<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-resources-for-health-professionals-including-aged-care-providers-pathology-providers-and-healthcare-managers>



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Disclaimer

Material available in relation to COVID-19 is for information only. Every effort is made to provide information that is accurate however, it is subject to change without notice. Responsibility lies with the individual facility and you are encouraged to direct any queries to your State/Territory Health Department, Lawyer, Accountant or other professional, as deemed necessary.