



Australian Government

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Factsheet HSV131 - Alternative Therapies

Purpose

This Factsheet covers the current policy on alternative therapies under DVA Health Card arrangements.

What are alternative therapies?

Under DVA arrangements, alternative therapies include:

- acupuncture and acupressure
- aromatherapy
- homeopathy
- hypnotherapy and hypnosis
- massage or therapeutic touch
- meditation
- music therapy
- reflexology and relation therapy
- reiki
- tai chi; and
- yoga.

What alternative therapies does DVA cover?

Under Gold and White Card arrangements, entitled persons cannot access funding for services offered by any alternative therapy providers, such as masseurs, naturopaths or homeopaths.

In 2010, DVA reviewed the policy related to alternative therapies for Gold and White Card holders. This review considered evidence for alternative therapies, including the qualifications and regulation of alternative therapy providers and how veteran agencies overseas deal with alternative therapies. Unfortunately there was often only limited information available on the evidence for the effects of an alternative therapy including the methodological quality of known reviews where the number of trials tends to be low. The review indicated there was not enough evidence to make recommendations about safety or efficacy of a particular therapy. On this basis DVA could not be confident that funding the above alternative therapies by alternative therapy providers under DVA arrangements would have significant benefits for patients, be cost-effective or practical to implement at this time. A copy of this review is available upon request.

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Massage may be funded if it is delivered during a consultation with a physiotherapist, chiropractor or osteopath. The provider will use his or her clinical judgement to determine whether massage techniques, in conjunction with other treatments, are an appropriate form of treatment for the entitled person. The entitled person needs a referral from their Local Medical Officer (LMO) or General Practitioner (GP), and the health provider must be registered with Medicare Australia. For more information, see Factsheets [HSV13 Chiropractic services](#), [HSV14 Osteopathic Services](#) and [HSV19 Physiotherapy Services](#).

Acupuncture may be funded if provided by LMOs or GPs who are registered with Medicare Australia to provide this treatment.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this Factsheet is general in nature and does not take into account individual circumstances. You should not make important decisions, such as those that affect your financial or lifestyle position on the basis of information contained in this Factsheet. Where you are required to lodge a written claim for a benefit, you must take full responsibility for your decisions prior to the written claim being determined. You should seek confirmation in writing of any oral advice you receive from DVA relating to complex or important matters.

Related Factsheets

- [HSV01 Health Services Available to the Veteran Community](#)
- [HSV13 Chiropractic services](#)
- [HSV14 Osteopathic Services](#)
- [HSV19 Physiotherapy Services](#)
- [HSV20 Podiatry and Footwear Services](#)
- [HSV21 Dietetic Services](#)
- [HSV59 Eligibility for DVA Health Card — All Conditions \(Gold\) or Totally & Permanently Incapacitated \(Gold\)](#)
- [HSV60 Using the DVA Health Card — All Conditions \(Gold\) or Totally & Permanently Incapacitated \(Gold\)](#)
- [HSV61 DVA Health Card — Specific Conditions \(White\)](#)

More Information

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[Factsheet Website](http://factsheets.dva.gov.au): factsheets.dva.gov.au

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