



Medicare Eligibility for Missions Interlink Members

Under a Ministerial Order, a missionary will qualify for Medicare benefits, provided that the missionary is an Australian citizen, was last absent from Australia for no longer than 5 years, and has previously qualified for Medicare.

Issue the attached pro forma letter on your letterhead to all your (eligible) missionaries when they are returning to Australia for furlough or emergency treatment, and BEFORE they have any dealings with Medicare. Ensure this happens, even if they have an apparently current card, as it could be confiscated or claims may be rejected when their record is matched with the Immigration computer file. However, they should only produce the letter if a problem with eligibility arises.

(Also make sure that they know they must ask to have their passport stamped by Immigration when entering or leaving Australia – evidence may be needed for Centrelink, Taxation and other purposes, as well as Medicare.)

You may write the form letter as from your mission on their behalf, or leave its wording as is for them to complete and sign. A copy of the letter is kept, as it will be needed should any problem arise.

Advise missionaries to only produce the completed letter if Medicare asks them to fill in forms such as Medicare enrolment application form, which will disclose their intention to return overseas - the letter will cover that circumstance which would otherwise render them ineligible.

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