In early February, I was delighted to announce the Garrison Health Services (GHS) contract has been extended for an additional two years, until October 2018.

Over the past three years the GHS team has worked to create, test, learn, improve and optimise this service. The agreement for contract extension is a testament to our service delivery since June 2012. I recognise that the success of GHS is due to the committed subcontractors and Service Providers that we work with. Our partners and network of dedicated medical providers are instrumental in our delivery of a quality service. I sincerely thank you—our original providers who signed on early, and the new providers to the network that continue to join each day—for your ongoing support and commitment to the provision of world-class healthcare for the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

Now that the two year contract extension period has been secured, this is our opportunity to renew our focus to further improve the high quality service delivery we are already known for. You can read more about this milestone and our focus moving forward below.

Our Medical Specialists, Allied Health professionals and Hospitals are of the highest quality and enable GHS to deliver the best healthcare experience to men and women of the ADF.

I look forward to working with you in this next phase of the contract.

Thank you for your ongoing support,

Justine Cain
Divisional General Manager
Garrison Health Services

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The health of the ADF is central to everything we do

The GHS framework is designed to provide a world-class healthcare service that continually delivers quality care to all ADF personnel.

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The Medibank capability

Medibank’s experience, access to healthcare providers and knowledge is leveraged to manage the ADF’s end-to-end healthcare needs.

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Innovate to deliver

GHS explores and implements unique solutions to deliver a complex and unprecedented contract.

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Mutually beneficial outcomes

GHS strikes an optimum balance between clinical excellence and efficiency, providing high-quality accessible healthcare at an efficient cost.

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Easy and efficient to work with

The delivery of simple, quality outcomes in a complex health environment.

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Clinical excellence

GHS services are underpinned by clinical quality frameworks and processes to ensure best practice healthcare delivery.

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Values driven

GHS goals are achieved by living the core Medibank values of customer focus, accountability, integrity and respect.
As mentioned above, the GHS contract has been extended from an initial four year contract, for an additional two years until October 2018.

This is a testament to our understanding of the unique ADF health environment and the strong partnerships that have been formed with our high quality service providers. Combined with the growth of an experienced and varied GHS Service Provider Network, the team is able to leverage highly skilled healthcare providers to work in collaboration nationwide, to service the ADF’s end-to-end healthcare needs.

A quick look back on the journey so far

In 2008 the Department of Defence commenced a significant reform program. One of the key elements of this activity was the Australian Defence Force Health Services (ADFHS) project. The goal of this project was to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of ADF health service delivery through:

- rationalisation of the number of health service contracts being managed by Joint Health Command (JHC)
- improved national standardisation of health service delivery and consistency in healthcare
- benefits in leveraging the purchasing power of industry Service Providers.

After a highly competitive tender process and complex negotiations, in mid-2012 the ADF announced a first-of-a-kind agreement with Medibank, to work in collaboration to deliver an improved national healthcare solution. This resulted in the creation of Medibank’s ‘Garrison Health Services’ business unit.

Contract inception was an intense period of rapid implementation. The sheer scale and complexities of this innovative model of care was a first not just for Medibank, but Australia. That period soon gave way to a time of operational stability, embedding of processes and then business-as-usual which allowed the opportunity to improve efficiencies and explore innovation.

The GHS team will now focus on further improving the high quality service delivery. The team will continue to apply our detailed understanding of the ADF’s healthcare needs to advance access to, and improve the quality of, healthcare, while ensuring value-for-money.

It is a privilege to be the provider of health services to the ADF and GHS remains focused on delivering and enhancing the professional provision of a world-class military health service.

Important security reminder

Does your practice adhere to your privacy and confidentiality obligations?

In addition to the usual privacy and confidentiality obligations you are required to abide to when providing healthcare to the ADF, there are some additional security obligations that you need to be aware of.

The ADF operating environment is unlike many other workplaces, due to its complex and vulnerable nature, and its range of potential threats. By ensuring that you have good security practices in place, and by meeting your security responsibilities, you too play a part in protecting Australia’s national interests.

Your security obligations are detailed in the GHS Operational Procedures and provide a guide to help your practice uphold a robust framework to handle highly confidential information for ADF personnel.
What is available at St Luke’s ADF Ward

In 2013 the Department of Defence acquired a fully provisional and operational private surgical, rehabilitation and medical ward, located in St Luke’s Hospital at Potts Point Sydney.

The ADF Ward includes 12 reserved beds, each in a private room with ensuite facilities, a dedicated recreation area, with an onsite ADF Liaison Unit that provides full administration and discharge support. There is a Senior ADF Medical Officer to service the Unit.

The dedicated ADF Ward is the contracted solution for an ADF inpatient in the Central Sydney region and it is preferable, where clinically appropriate, that ADF personnel are admitted here for surgical procedures as well as general medical conditions.

The ADF Ward is also suitable for ADF personnel that require post-surgical recovery, in the instance that discharge to the Base is not an appropriate option.

What’s not available...

The following health services are not available at St Luke’s Hospital, and ADF personnel requiring these medical services should be directed to the nearest Hospital with emergency capability.

- Acute Mental Health conditions
- Obstetric
- Any acute, unstable conditions that you believe will require emergency care, and should therefore be directed to an emergency department.

For more information or to refer an ADF patient to St Luke’s Ward:

Phone: 0421 617 098
Alternate number: 02 9356 0200
[and request to page the Hospital in charge RN].
Open 24 hours, 7 days a week

Did you know...

HMAS Canberra is the lead ship of the two ship Canberra class Amphibious Assault Ships otherwise known as a Landing Helicopter Dock (LHD).

LHDs are the largest ships ever constructed by the Royal Australian Navy, and the onboard medical facility is of a size and scope which would rival some regional hospitals. It is equipped with two operating theatres, an eight bed Critical Care Unit, and a variety of low and medium dependency beds.

From left: The GHS team onboard HMAS Canberra: Josh Stewart, Jodie Granger, Dr Rob McGrath, Dr Julie Phillips and Lisa Corten.

Townsville welcomed the first GHS Regional Provider event

In early November, a regional event in Townsville was held for local Service Providers to engage with the GHS team and ADF representatives from Lavarack and Townsville On-base Health Centres.

This regionally specific event provided an opportunity for Medical Specialists, Allied Health, Rehabilitation and Hospital Providers to hear from senior ADF and GHS personnel and be involved in a Q&A session led by Dr Julie Phillips, GHS National Medical Director. Service Providers were informed of opportunities and approaches to working collaboratively to meet ADF healthcare requirements.

Feedback from the event was positive with local Service Providers gaining a deeper understanding of the unique healthcare needs of ADF personnel and the environment in which they operate.

ADF personnel make up a large proportion of the local Townsville population and healthcare providers have a strong sense of community and pride in servicing the healthcare needs of ADF personnel.

GHS will work with JHC to facilitate similar events in other regional ADF locations.

From left: Brigadier Georgeina Whelan and GHS Medical Director Dr Julie Phillips
On-base Health Practitioners are solely dedicated to ensure the ongoing health of ADF personnel, and as such it is always preferable for them to be managed in the appropriate ADF environment.

Many ADF bases are fully equipped to supply the following primary healthcare services:

- General Practitioner
- Pharmacy
- Physiotherapy
- Dental
- Mental Health.

If you have received a referral for an ADF patient whom you feel requires further treatment for the services listed above, they should be directed back to the On-base Health Centre for the Medical Officer (MO) to coordinate treatment (or further approval to see an Off-base Service Provider where On-base treatment is not available).

If you provide a prescription or recommend a health related aid or appliance, your patient should be referred back to the On-base Health Centre with the prescription or recommendation for it to be dispensed and/or approved.

The ADF has set guidelines to assist the GHS Provider Network to comply with ADF policy and ensure appropriate treatment is provided to ADF personnel. You can read more about your obligations when treating ADF personnel in the Operational Procedure Guidelines on the GHS website.
A guide to working with ADF personnel

There are guidelines available to assist the GHS Provider Network to work effectively with ADF personnel.

The document can assist you to ensure you adhere to ADF policy when providing appropriate treatment to Entitled Personnel (EPs).

You are encouraged to read the ADF policy guidelines—Healthcare entitlements for ADF personnel on the GHS website to ensure appropriate treatment is provided to EPs.

General principles for reference

The ADF will pay associated expenses for approved healthcare to EPs subject to the following principles. The designated treatment must:

a. Be clinically necessary for the purpose of maintaining health and mental wellbeing.
b. Prevent disease, diagnosing or treating an injury, illness or disability.
c. Sustain or restore a serving EP to an operationally effective and deployable member of the ADF.
d. Adhere to the scientific principle of evidence based medicine. This principle would eliminate most non-Medical Benefits Schedule (MBS) items and any new medical procedures or remedies that have not been thoroughly and scientifically investigated.
e. Not be for purely cosmetic purposes.
f. Is in accordance with ADF policy.

Working with us – a checklist

This handy checklist works as an at-a-glance guide to working with us. Print it out!

Send all invoices direct to GHS via:
Email garrison.offbase@medibank.com.au
Fax 1300 633 227
Mail Garrison Health Services
C/- Medibank Health Solutions
PO Box 9999
Melbourne VIC 3001

Do not send invoices to:
• ADF personnel
• Referring ADF On-base Health Centres.

Send written health reports back to the referring ADF On-base Medical Practitioner:
• Within five business days.
• Details are located on the PM528 referral form.

Do not send written health reports to GHS.

Seek approval for non-approved services from the referring ADF On-base Medical Practitioner for:
• Treatment that does not attract a rebate under the Medical Benefits Schedule or is not listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.
• Where there is a requirement to recommend a course of management that goes beyond the scope of what was requested on the initial referral.
• If an elective procedure or treatment is recommended that is likely to require the ADF personnel to be unfit for work for more than one day (the scheduling of which may require negotiation with the personnel’s Unit Command).
• Any Health Appliance, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation items or equipment.
• Plastic surgery generally requires pre-approval, which will only be considered in the context of a clear clinical indication or reconstruction following injury.

Do not seek clinical approval for non-approved services from GHS.
Do you have a colleague who could support the ADF and the vital role they play for Australia?

By the nature of their profession, ADF personnel need to maintain operational readiness or regain peak health condition to fulfil their duties—it’s crucial they have access to world-class healthcare.

Refer a qualified healthcare provider, and encourage them to use their medical expertise to support this interesting, important and unique group of Australians. If they apply to the GHS preferred provider network your colleague could benefit from priority status in referral systems and favourable payments terms, while taking pride in playing the essential role of serving the health needs of Australia’s Defence Force.

For more information
Call: 1300 126 420
Email: adfenquiries@medibank.com.au

medibankhealth.com.au/garrisonhealthservices