



## Understanding the healthcare system

**Where to get help.**

**Who is the right person to help me? How do I find them?**

In Australia, the healthcare system is complex and changes all the time. You will need lots of different people to work together to make life easier for you.

This information sheet provides you with tips and assistance to help you to navigate the healthcare system and the people who may be involved in your care.

### **1. Find a good doctor**

A major part of the doctor's job is to provide information and coordinate services between all the other health professionals to help you.

A good doctor is someone who:

- you trust
- listens to you
- explains things to you
- helps you find other health professionals you need
- treats you with respect and as an individual

## 2. Find out who you need to see and where you can find them.

Following an amputation you will need assistance from the following healthcare professionals:

- **Doctor** (Rehabilitation Specialist)
- **Physiotherapist:** will assist you to regain balance, strength and stamina. They will help you with the use of mobility aids and develop an exercise program that suits your needs
- **Occupational Therapist:** will help you to adjust to daily living activities such as: personal care, education, leisure and work
- **Prosthetist:** will assess you for a prosthesis. If you are a suitable candidate, your Prosthetist will manufacture, supply and fit the prosthesis
- **Podiatrist:** will help you to manage and maintain good foot healthcare
- **Psychologist:** will assist you to overcome any emotional and mental-health issues



**TIP - write down questions and things you need to talk about before you go to the meeting.**

Depending on your situation you may also need the support from a:

- **Social Worker:** for counselling assistance
- **Dietician:** for meal planning
- **Diabetes Educator:** to help you to manage living with diabetes
- **Exercise Physiologist:** will work with you to develop an exercise plan

Remember, it is your choice who provides you with care and support. If you would like to change your provider at any time, talk honestly about the reasons why, and don't feel bad about it.



**TIP - take someone with you to a meeting to help you remember everything you want to talk about.**

## 3. Seek peer support: ask to speak to someone who has already been through amputation.

This might help ease concerns for you and your loved ones and allow you to ask lots of questions. Speaking to another amputee may give you a better understanding of what the future might look like. You can request a peer support visit from Limbs 4 Life.

## 4. Ask questions: about any 'out of pocket' costs for your healthcare or equipment.

For example: if healthcare professionals suggest assistive devices for you (eg. wheelchairs or shower stools) ask 'who pays for that now and in the future?'



**TIP - ask for information in writing if you can't remember or it's new information or you don't understand.**