



Provider 2024 Self-Assessment Report

May 2025

Provider Self-Assessment

The Department of Health, Disability and Ageing administers the Australian Government Hearing Services Program. The program works with contracted service providers to support their compliance. The program monitors provider compliance under the [Compliance Monitoring and Support Framework](#).

The Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) is a requirement of the [Service Provider Contract](#) (the contract). The SAT supports providers to undertake an annual review of their processes and systems to ensure they are compliant with the requirements of the program.

The SAT was available through Citizen Space from 14 October 2024. Submissions were due 30 November 2024.

Summary of Outcomes from the 2024 Self-Assessment Process

- 342 providers were required to submit a SAT and 336 (98.3%) providers submitted their SAT by the due date.
- 324 providers (97.6%) stated the SAT assisted them to comply with program requirements.
- 180 providers (53.6%) require follow up on one or more identified issues. These include:
 - client relocations (149 providers (44.3%)). Most of these are due to providers not reading or misinterpreting the question and not providing the information requested.
 - client consent (47 providers (14%))
- 27 providers (8%) suggested improvements for the SAT. An upcoming update to the Citizen Space website may address some of these suggestions. Some providers have requested specific contacts for different parts of the program however, for logging and tracking purposes, all enquiries must come through the Contact Centre or the hearing@health.gov.au email.

Providers are also reminded that the SAT is not the correct forum for suggesting program changes. Providers should respond to program consultations to ensure suggestions are formally recorded.

- 6 providers will be subject to further compliance activities due to not returning a SAT.

Compliance Issues

We identified several recurring issues through the SAT. While some providers will receive follow-up contact separately, all providers should take note of the following issues and should ensure that all staff understand the program requirements.

Client file relocations

While 55.7% of providers did provide details about how they ensure the record sent to a new provider is complete and accessible (Q1.6), some of the responses have raised other concerns. Some providers stated that records are printed out and sent as hard copy, when they also stated they keep all records digitally. These providers are reminded that digital records MUST NOT be printed out and sent as hard copy (refer [Schedule of Service Items and Fees 2024-2025](#) s30(8)).

Some providers who only keep paper (hard copy) records, stated that digital records received from other providers are printed out and kept in hard copy. Please be aware that s30(8) of the Schedule also applies to these records. You may print a copy for yourself if you wish, but the original (digital) file must be kept and sent to the new provider if a client relocates.

Some providers also noted that records are sent by standard or Express Post. Providers are reminded that all postage of client files must be by registered mail or courier (refer Schedule s30(3) & (6)).

Provision of information to clients

Question 3.3 of the 2024 SAT asked providers how they ensure the information required under s25 of the [Hearing Services Program \(Voucher\) Instrument 2019](#) and clause 7.1 of the contract is provided to clients. The majority of providers (over 90%) answered this question incorrectly. Most responses stated how and/or when information was provided, and/or what information was provided. The correct responses received outlined the processes and/or templates in place to ensure staff provided this information to clients.

Some providers noted they asked clients if they wanted to receive the Welcome Pack that is sent out to new clients. This pack MUST be provided to all new program clients, however they can choose whether to receive it by email or post or to have it printed out by the provider.

At Q2.4, regarding the provision of Client Rights and Responsibilities information to clients for home/nursing home visits and teleaudiology appointments, some providers stated this information is provided on request or had been provided to the client at their first appointment. Providers are reminded that this information MUST be provided to clients at all appointments, whether in a site or at another location.

Third-party agreements

Some providers are listing the device suppliers with which they have agreements/contracts as third parties (Q4.5). Providers should note that third-party hearing aid comparison or sales websites are those with which you have an agreement, contract or other arrangement for the referral of clients, to whom you then provide program services.

SAT responses

It is evident in many responses that providers are misinterpreting or not reading the SAT questions fully. This results in providers having to go back and change or amend answers, expressing confusion about having to answer questions that did not apply to them or having to provide further information through the SAT follow-ups. Providers are reminded to ensure they read the SAT questions fully before providing answers, and to provide responses relevant to the questions asked.