

22 May 2025

Attn: PHOs, General Practice, Pharmacy Sector and PMS / PhMS Vendors

Community Service Card – NHI Matching process issue

This communication is to advise you of a recent processing issue, related to Community Service Card (CSC) entitlement loading, that Health New Zealand has experienced.

In April and May 2025, the daily processing of some CSC card files received from MSD encountered errors that returned the cards to the “to-do” pile for the next day. This occurred repeatedly for the same cards.

As a result, some card renewals in April and May have experienced a delay in loading the new expiry date to the National Enrolment Service’s (NES) Entitlements database. In simple terms:

- The card numbers were loaded, but the process then failed.
- The matching process of the person details to the NHI was not activated.
- Local pharmacy and GP practice management systems did not receive the correct CSC entitlement information for their patients / health care users.

The issue blocking the automated processing is now resolved and 2,146 unmatched CSC cards are still being worked through for manual matching with the aim that all possible matches are done by the end of the month.

Standing operating processes see:

- batches of CSC cards and their customer details received from MSD are put through the Health New Zealand (Health NZ) NHI automated matching process which usually achieves a 97% match rate.
- the 3% unmatched cards are then sent to the Health NZ data quality team for manual matching, which generally achieves another 1.5%, leaving 1.5% of the MSD batch of CSC cards unable to be matched without further information.
- Health providers can help close this 1.5% unmatched gap and ensure their patients receive the correct billing by adding the CSC number into their PMS / PhMS when an individual health consumer presents with a card and their entitlement is not showing in the PMS system.
- Customers or their health care advocates may also contact our Health NZ Customer Contact Centre on 0800-855-066 to request a manual match between a known individual’s NHI and a known CSC card number if this cannot be done in the local practice management system (PMS).

Impact on consumers / health care service users

In April and May, due to the processing error, consumers, customers and patients who presented to receive health services such as funded General Practice visits or prescription dispensing, and who did not have their active CSC card with them, may have been incorrectly charged the copayments at the full rate if their CSC card was also not available via the NES service.

What happens next?

Health NZ is undertaking a post-incident-review and impact analysis and will determine what corrective actions (if any) may be required for consumers, as well as what improvements can be made in both the processing and monitoring of the processes to improve efficiency and reduce time lost in corrective actions. We will update you once we have completed this.

Further questions?

If you have any further questions, you are welcome to contact the Health NZ Customer Contact Centre on 0800-855-066.