



What is data linkage?

Data linkage is the process of joining together data from different sources. We want to link survey data your child's mother has provided with your child's data from Services Australia. There are three data sources we are asking your permission to link from Services Australia:

1. Medical Benefits Schedule or Medicare (MBS);
2. Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS);
3. Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).



Why is it important to link my child's data?

Linking data helps us get a really comprehensive view of your child's health and healthcare needs. By linking your child's data, we can get more accurate information than we would by asking questions in a survey.

Linking data also allows data, that has already been collected, to be used in new ways to help improve the lives of children. For example, by putting Medicare data together with survey data, we can see what issues children are facing, and whether existing health services are or aren't being used. Then, we can find ways to help people access existing health services, or identify new services that are needed.



What kind of information do you get from my child's health records?

We will not have access to the results of any medical test, just information on health events, medical conditions, treatments and medications, services used and how much they cost. See below for an example of the information we get from your child's Medicare record.

Date of service	Item number	Item description	Provider charge	Schedule Fee	Benefit Paid	Patient Out of Pocket	Bill Type
20/04/19	00023	Level B Consultation	\$38.30	\$34.30	\$34.30	\$4.00	Cash
22/06/19	11700	ECG	\$29.50	\$29.50	\$29.50		Bulk Bill



Is my child's data safe?

Yes, we make sure your child's data is secure. We have strict privacy and confidentiality rules and won't share any data that can identify your child. With your consent, we send your child's identifiers, such as name, date of birth and an ID number to Services Australia. The data is sent back to us with only the ID number – not your child's identifiers. This process is approved by the responsible Human Research Ethics Committees.



Why do I need to consent?

For MatCH to access health records for children under the age of 14 years, a parent must provide consent. As your child is on two separate Medicare cards, both primary card holders must provide consent. If only one parent/carer has provided consent, Services Australia will only provide data that is related to the consenting parent/carer's card. To help us get a complete picture of your child's health, it's important for the study to access your child's health records linked to both Medicare cards.



What choice do I have?

Linking your child's data is voluntary. Saying no to linking your child's data will not affect your child's or their mother's participation in the study, or your or your child's medical care in any way. You can also choose which data sources are okay to link. You don't have to agree to all of them.



Who can I contact if I have more questions?

Women's Health Australia
 Phone: 1800 068 081 (Freecall)
 Email alswh@newcastle.edu.au or info@alswh.org.au