

Ambulance services in SA – what's new?

How are services being improved?

SA Ambulance Service is the main provider of ambulance services in South Australia. It receives more than 400,000 calls each year, including around 400 triple zero calls every day. Paramedics and ambulance officers respond to about 250,000 incidents every year.

To make sure patients receive the right care, the first time and at the right hospital, more than \$16 million is being invested under Transforming Health. This will employ 72 additional frontline paramedics and support staff, and expand the ambulance fleet by 12 vehicles.

Two new ambulance stations will be built in Adelaide's North and West under Transforming Health. The new Noarlunga ambulance station is now open and operational. The station has the capacity to house 13 ambulances, five specialist response vehicles and 50 operational and administrative staff. Noarlunga ambulance station is located opposite Noarlunga Hospital, and is the new regional headquarters for the South, improving service delivery and response times in the area.

Extended Care Paramedics will reduce pressure on Emergency Departments by treating people with certain medical conditions in their own home, reducing the need to take some people to hospital.

What about ambulance costs?

Did you know that ambulance costs are not covered by Medicare? Some private health insurance policies do cover the cost of an ambulance, but it is vital that you check your level of cover with your private insurance provider. Many private health insurance schemes only cover you and your family for emergency ambulance services, or for a limited number of trips each year.

Some consumers are unaware that they can take out ambulance cover (insurance) with SA Ambulance Service. It has introduced two tiers of cover to provide you with greater control over the level of security you need:

1. Standard Ambulance Cover includes all ambulance attendance only within South Australia for permanent SA residents (current qualifications still apply).
2. Ambulance Cover plus will cover you for all ambulance attendances Australia-wide. It costs an additional \$15 per year for singles, or \$30 for those on family plans, above standard costs.

You can find more information on pricing, sign up and pay online [here](#).

If you have emergency cover with a private health fund, Ambulance Cover Extras (ACE) may be all you need. It will cover you for non-emergency ambulance transports Australia-wide, for example for tests, ongoing treatment or transfer to another hospital. Find out more [here](#).

It is important to know that ambulance fees will be charged for people with no ambulance cover, under certain circumstances. Costs range from \$208 for Treat no Transport (where a patient is treated on scene, but not transported to hospital), to \$3,039 when a retrieval team is provided. The standard ambulance transport fee in the metropolitan area is \$934. More information is available [here](#).

Health Consumers Alliance recommendation: make time to review and purchase the level of ambulance cover that best suits you and your family.

Information source: [SA Ambulance Service website](#).