



Queensland
Government
Queensland **Health**

QUEENSLAND AMPUTEE LIMB SERVICE

QALS REFERENCE MANUAL

2008 Edition

MANUAL NUMBER: 45

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ABOUT THIS MANUAL

This manual has been compiled as a source of information regarding the Queensland Amputee Limb Service (QALS) to assist clinicians and health professionals involved in the care and treatment of amputees. It is registered to the identified holder and contains those items which would be appropriate to the holder. Thus, there can be differences between the versions of the “manual” depending on its target audience.

The manual is mainly composed of information statements and procedures, as well as samples of forms where appropriate. These are inserted in a D-ring binder to allow ease of replacement as revisions occur.

INTRODUCTION

QALS is the administrative body of Queensland Health which is responsible for the administration of the provision of artificial limbs to residents of Queensland.

In 1973, the Commonwealth introduced a “Free Limb Scheme” which was administered by the Department of Veteran’s Affairs as a modified extension to the services being provided to disabled veterans. In September 1990, the Scheme was replaced by the “Artificial Limb Scheme”, which although very similar, introduced a client contribution and measures to improve efficiency.

In 1994 the Department of Veteran’s Affairs proposed that each State would be responsible for the ALS operating in their State and commenced a transition of services from the Commonwealth over to the relevant State Health Department.

The scheme was broad banded under the Australian Health Care Agreement and became the full responsibility of Queensland Health on the 1st December 1998 and is now known as the Queensland Amputee Limb Services (QALS).

OUR MISSION

To ensure the provision of essential prostheses for eligible amputees through the effective and efficient management of a client focussed Artificial Limb Service and complimentary initiatives

We will facilitate the process of prosthetic assessment, provision, acquittal, repair and maintenance of prostheses and provide consumable supplies within our resources in an atmosphere that seeks continuous improvement.

We believe education and learning opportunities are essential to quality and thus QALS is committed to providing opportunities for interaction for all involved in the care of amputees.

PHILOSOPHY

QALS recognises that it contributes only one component of the rehabilitation process for an amputee, that is, the operation of a service which funds the provision of a basic prosthetic device. QALS also recognises that within this funding role lies the ability to establish standards of performance in cooperation with the other partners involved in the process.

QALS recognises that quality, both in process and product, are key elements in client satisfaction, and as such, QALS will undertake quality assurance and improvement activities as appropriate.

QALS recognises that communication and cooperation are vital to the service, and as such, will strive to establish, maintain and enhance links with the amputee, the amputee support groups, the prosthetic manufacturers, the rehabilitation team, the amputee clinics, as well as with other health care agencies both within Queensland Health and elsewhere.

QALS recognises that its resources are finite and that efficiency and effectiveness are key concepts to maximising the benefit that the service can provide to its clients. QALS will explore avenues which seek the highest benefit to the individual amputee within its limitations and consistent with its obligations to the amputees as a whole.

ORGANISATION & STAFFING

Organisational Structure

QALS operates a State-wide service and as such interacts with many other agencies and groups, both at the State and Commonwealth level. Administratively, QALS funds and maintains records for all amputees in Queensland eligible for the 'free limb scheme' artificial limb service provision.

Location and Contact Details

Centro Buranda Office Suites 3rd Floor
264 Ipswich Road, Buranda Qld 4102
or
P O Box 6011
Buranda Queensland 4102
Ph: (07) 3896 3770 Fax: (07) 3896 3775

Email qals@health.qld.gov.au
Website www.health.qld.gov.au/qals

Staffing

The staffing profile for QALS comprises of three full time positions as outlined below, with other casual resources utilised as required.

Manager

This position is responsible for the management of resources, planning, evaluating, and policy development for the Queensland Amputee Limb Service to ensure efficient and cost effective service delivery of the state-wide ‘free limb scheme’.

Liaise and negotiate with prosthetic manufacturers, health professionals, amputee associations, amputees and external agencies to ensure the effective service provision of the Queensland Amputee Limb Service on behalf of Queensland Health.

Staff Prosthetist

This position is to provide clinical expertise and professional advice on prosthetic services to the Queensland Amputee Limb Service and its Manager in the operation of the ‘free limb scheme’ on behalf of Queensland Health.

Administrative Officer

This position is to provide all administrative and office support to the Queensland Amputee Limb Service and its Manager in the operation of the ‘free limb scheme’ on behalf of Queensland Health.

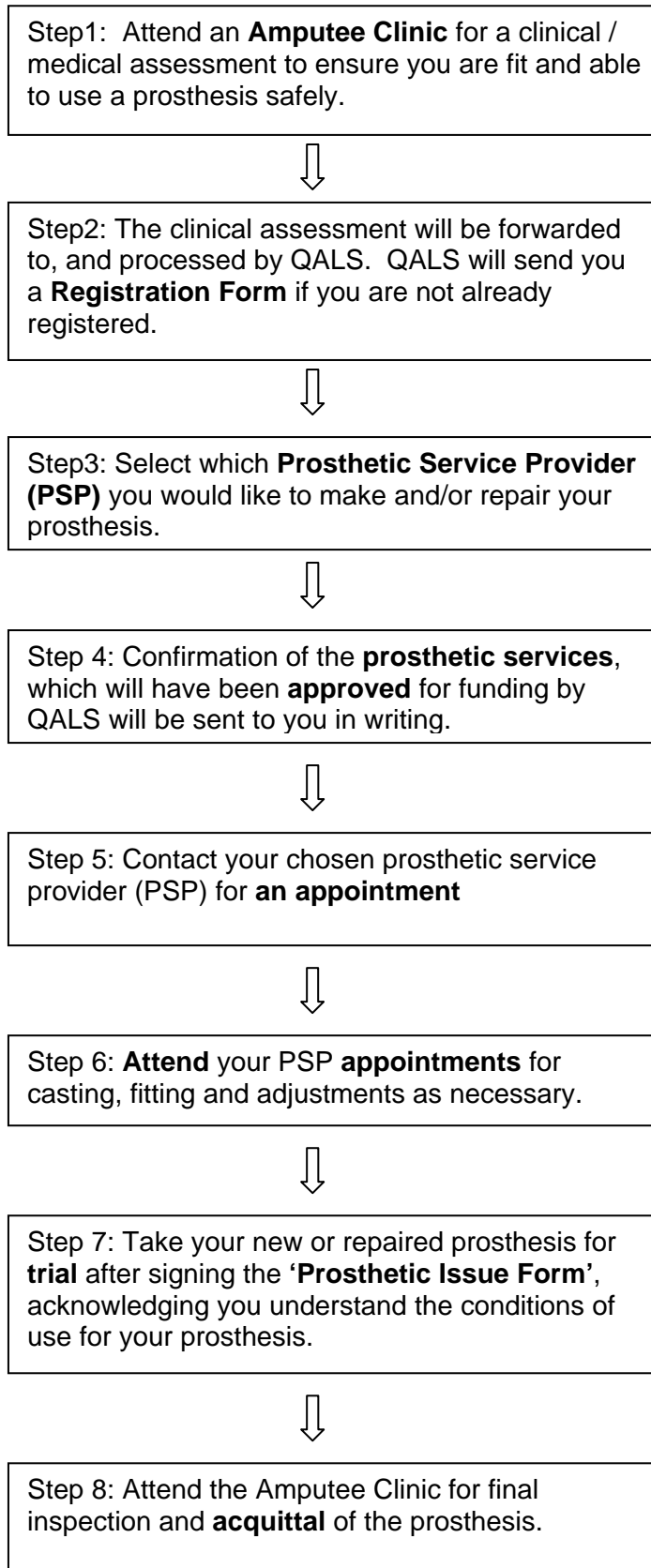
REGISTRATION

QALS provide a ‘*Information Pamphlet*’ which is to be provided to all clients when services are requested, as well as, mailed to the client when approval is advised by QALS. **The information on the pamphlet is not policy, it just provides basic information and contact details.** Please refer to a specific procedure on the item in question for clarification.

If you are seeking assistance for the first time through this service, you will be required to complete a ‘**Registration Form**’. QALS can not review or process your request for service, until you have completed, signed, and returned the Registration Form. You will be notified in writing if you are eligible for prosthetic services funded by Queensland Health, under ‘the free limb scheme’.

As a general guide, if you are a permanent resident of Queensland, hold a current medicare card, have not received compensation for your limb loss or are visiting from interstate or overseas, you will most likely be eligible for services.

PROSTHETIC SERVICE PROVISION



Provision of Services

Following is a guide of how services are connected and function. If there are any doubts or concerns please contact the QALS for clarification.

Amputee Clinics

Amputee Clinics provide clinical assessments by experienced rehabilitation health professionals for all amputees who attend. This is a free public outpatient service available by appointment at participating hospitals. A **'MDT Assessment Form'** will assist with establishing whether the client is medically fit and suitable to use a prosthesis. The information on this form will also include any clinical or relevant life style issues. The completed form will be sent on to QALS by the Amputee Clinic Coordinator for processing.

New amputees are required to attend a recognised Amputee Clinic for regular clinical assessment by a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) of health professionals. QALS recommends the client continue to attend the amputee clinic for three years post amputation to establish a good support relationship with highly skilled staff.

When the client has completed their interim rehabilitation program within the hospital, the MDT will assess their capabilities and recommend for them to move onto a permanent prosthesis, known as a definitive artificial limb. At this time the client will undergo a **'Mobility Assessment'** by the rehabilitation physiotherapist which will identify the activity rating or mobility level to assist in the design of the future definitive prosthesis.

If the client has moved from interstate to live in Queensland in a permanent capacity, their records will be requested from the artificial limb service in their state of origin. If client is visiting or moved from overseas, or a compensable client, please ask them to contact the office for the appropriate forms to assist with determining their eligibility status.

If the client has not already done so, they will need to complete a **'Registration Form'**. QALS will review and process their request for service, after they have signed, completed and returned the Registration Form. The client will be notified in writing if they are eligible for prosthetic services funded by Queensland Health.

Prosthetic Service Providers - PSP

Once the client has been reviewed in an amputee clinic they will need to be assessed by a **Prosthetist**. The Prosthetist is the person who will design and make their prosthesis (artificial limb); make repairs and adjustments to their prosthesis; and provide them with consumables, such as stump socks and liners. Prosthetists are employed by the private prosthetic manufacturing companies. These companies are contracted by QALS and are known as **prosthetic service provider (PSP)**. The PSP workshops are mainly located in Brisbane; however they do travel to the major coastal towns where the public hospital hosts an amputee clinic. Depending on where the client lives, they may have a choice in prosthetic manufacturing companies or they may not.

After the client has been assessed by a Prosthetist, an **'Assessment of Prosthetic Needs Form'** identifying the design and type of prosthesis most suitable for the client will be sent to QALS for processing and approval. It should be noted, that once a PSP has been given approval to manufacture the prosthesis and has commenced work on the artificial limb, the client is not permitted to change PSP. A copy of the PSP Assessment will be sent to the clinic if the services were initiated by clinic attendance.

When the client takes their new prosthesis for trial, the Prosthetist will inform them on the correct manner of care and use for their newly acquired artificial limb and/or components. The client will be required to sign a **'Prosthetic Issue Document'** stating that they understand and accept the terms and conditions of use for this prosthesis.

Acquittal and Quality Control Process

After the client has completed the trial period of the new prosthesis/components, they will be required to acknowledge acceptance of the artificial limb and indicate if they are satisfied with the prosthesis or repair work done. This will be achieved by the client attending an amputee clinic or the PSP for the acquittal process for the work requested. The prosthesis, or repairs completed, will need to be confirmed and/or examined on behalf of QALS.

If services were initiated by a clinic attendance, the MDT member reviewing the prosthesis, will need to ensure the end product appears to meet an appropriate quality standard and is consistent with the work requested and approved. The client will also need to complete and sign the bottom of the patient section of the **Acquittal and Quality Control Form**. This is the client's opportunity to state if they are happy with the prosthetic services provided to them by the PSP and/or the quality of the prosthesis or repair to their prosthesis. A member of the MDT at the amputee clinic will need to complete and sign the other section on the Acquittal and Quality Control Form.

In some special circumstances the PSP that provided the services may be required to complete the other section. When this occurs QALS will follow up with a phone call to the client to confirm they are satisfied with the prosthesis they have been trialling and the services provided. This will be closely monitored by QALS and random quality inspections by the QALS staff prosthetist will also follow these service provisions.

This process is to ensure the artificial limb meets the client's needs and prosthetic manufacturing safety standards are met. Failure to comply with this process may negate any warranty that exists on the prosthesis. If the client fails to comply with the acquittal process it may affect the client's future eligibility to access the 'free limb scheme'.

Components

QALS provides prostheses (artificial limbs) for all types of amputation with components from an approved list maintained by QALS. Special components may be considered in conjunction with the client, their treating MDT and PSP. QALS may accept cost sharing with the client if they wish to purchase components not on the QALS approved list. It is advised that the client discuss in detail with their Prosthetist (PSP) any components they are considering, as some combinations may not be safe or function correctly. Refer to section on 'Services not funded by QALS', further in the manual for more detailed information.

Expected period of use for a new Prosthesis

The prosthesis and associated accessories are to be maintained in a clean condition by the client. A new prosthesis has **an expected period of use of at least 3 years**. Any major repairs or replacements under this time may require justification from the client and/or the treating Prosthetist or Clinician. Prostheses are not automatically replaced just because the expected time period has passed.

Minor Repairs

Minor repairs can be arranged directly with the PSP by the client. However, if the inspection of the prosthesis reveals that more extensive repairs are required, approval for a major repair may be required before any further work can proceed. The major repairs will require either a prosthetic assessment review by the PSP or a review at an amputee clinic, depending on the reason behind the need for the major repair. Only artificial limbs supplied by QALS and listed as current will be repaired at QALS expense.

Consumables & Supplies

QALS funds consumable items such as stump socks, cosmetic gloves etc, through the PSP. Annual limits do apply.

Emergency or stand by Prosthesis

QALS funding allows for the provision of one (1) prosthesis per amputated limb, which meets all, or most, of the amputee's daily needs. An emergency or stand by prosthesis may be requested under special circumstances, such as geographically isolated location, specific occupations, limited medical conditions or special needs. All such requests will be individually assessed on merit from information provided by the client, their employer, the PSP and MDT member. Even if the client qualifies under the assessment criteria, funding limitations may mean they are placed on a waiting list until funding is available.

QALS does not fund recreational limbs under any circumstances.

Compensation Clients

Clients who are pursuing compensation for the amputation of their limb will be provided with essential prosthetic services until such time as their legal situation is finalised. Clients should inform QALS if they are pursuing compensation at the time of registration for services. QALS will be seeking reimbursement of all incurred costs accumulated during the period of their legal action, after settlement if finalised. Once compensation proceedings have been settled, clients are responsible for their own prosthetic services. If compensation is being sought, or pursued at a later period, the client must inform QALS of their intention when they begin proceedings with their legal representative. QALS will provide future prosthetic cost estimates to assist the client with their legal action, upon request.

Appointments

Clients are encouraged to make appointments at their amputee clinic and/or PSP as they deem necessary.

Attendances for medical and mobility assessments will each require appointments made in advance with the amputee clinic.

Prosthetic Assessment will require appointments made in advance with the PSP.

Casting, fitting and adjustment appointments will be made with the client by the PSP as necessary.

Appointments at the amputee clinic for the acquittal of any new limbs and major repairs will be made as the work progresses on the prosthesis by the PSP, usually after the limb has been taken for trial.

Complaints

Clients are encouraged to raise any concerns regarding the services they are receiving at any stage of their prosthetic service provision. All concerns, questions and complaints should be dealt with when they arise through the appropriate Queensland Health's complaints process or procedure. Amputee clinic staff and PSPs are reminded of the Queensland Health's Code of Conduct which services are provided under. If you are unable to resolve any patient issues, or have any queries regarding prosthetic services funded under the 'free limb scheme', please contact QALS for assistance. Service Evaluation forms will be sent out at the conclusion of each major service provision. We can improve our service by understanding the client's needs and listening to their concerns, refer to 'Complaint's Procedure'.

SPECIALISED PROSTHETIC SERVICES

Other Prostheses

Prostheses for conditions other than limb deficiency are not available through QALS.

Surgical Footwear

Except as specifically allowed for limited defined situations, QALS does not provide surgical footwear.

Partial Hand

Partial hand prostheses may be provided through QALS, however replacement digits are not supplied.

Partial Foot

Partial Foot prostheses may be supplied by QALS for partial foot amputations, proximal to the metatarsal phalangeal joint.

A client with a partial foot amputation may have the following supplied by QALS:

- A custom made prosthesis designed to fit the client's stump as in Chopart and Lisfranc amputations.
- Inserts for their footwear including toe fillers and/or rocker soles and heels (as opposed to surgical footwear which is not provided by QALS).

SERVICES NOT FUNDED BY QALS

Items not on QALS component list

QALS will allow a Prosthetic Service Provider to utilise special components which are not on the QALS approval list under the following conditions:-

- the requested components must be included on the Australian Register of Therapeutics Goods.
- the registered components will also meet the structural standards ISO 10328 or equivalent for lower limb prosthesis and ISO/DIS 15032 for hips.
- the components used outside of the QALS approval list will be at the client's own expense.
- QALS will not maintain or repair that component.

QALS must be notified if any such component is added to a prosthesis which is has been partly or fully funded by QALS.

PSPs are required to list all such components with their identifying serial number on the reverse of the Prosthetic Assessment form when the prosthesis is taken for trail.

Excessive Service Requests

Basic service delivery allows for a new prosthesis every three years, once a client has finalised their rehabilitation program. During the rehabilitation phase, it is normal to expect several socket replacements in the first three years once mobility commences and the client begins to return to normal activities.

It is acceptable for a prosthesis to be serviced and checked annually by the PSP at the client's request, or if the prosthesis is not functioning as expected. However any replacement prosthesis under three years will require justification and explanation if damaged or undue wear is evident.

Different components have different expected periods of use and warranty as does all machinery parts. The PSP will advise the expected period of use for the individual components and sockets based on the life style needs and work commitments of the amputee. If there appears to be excessive use or unexplained broken parts, outside the normal expectations supported by the component manufacturer, QALS will request an explanation from the PSP and amputee.

AMPUTEE CLINIC LOCATIONS

Metropolitan

Royal Brisbane Hospital
Butterfield Street
Herston Qld 4029
Ph: [07] 3636 7286
Fax: [07] 3636 1665

Princess Alexandra Hospital
Ipswich Road
Woolloongabba Q 4102
Ph: [07] 3240 2245
Fax: [07] 3240 7047

Royal Children's Hospital
Bramston Terrace
Herston Q 4006
Ph: [07] 3636 5400
Fax: [07] 3636 5181

Non-Metropolitan

Redcliffe Hospital
Anzac Avenue
Redcliffe Q 4020
Royal Brisbane Hospital
Ph: [07] 3636 7286

Nambour Hospital
Hospital St
Nambour Q 4560
Royal Brisbane Hospital
Ph: [07] 3636 7286

Toowoomba District
Baillie Henderson Hospital
Toowoomba Qld 4350
Royal Brisbane Hospital
Ph: [07] 3636 7286

Gold Coast District
Helensvale Community Centre
105 Lindfield Road
Helensvale 4212
Ph: [07] 5519 8501

Regional Areas

Fraser Coast District
Maryborough & Hervey Bay
185 Walker Street
Maryborough Qld 4650
Ph: [07] 4123 8471

Bundaberg Hospital
Bourbong Street
Bundaberg Qld 4670
Ph: [07] 4150 2550

Rockhampton Hospital
Canning Street
Rockhampton Qld 4700
Ph: [07] 4920 6274

Mackay Hospital
Bridge Street
Mackay Qld 4741
Ph: [07] 4968 6487

Townsville Hospital
100 Angus Smith Drive
Townsville Qld 4810
Ph; [07] 4796 3544

Cairns Base Hospital
The Esplanade
Cairns Qld 4870
Ph: [07] 4050 6226

AMPUTATION DESCRIPTIONS/ABBREVIATIONS

QALS wishes to establish for its purposes a consistent set of abbreviations, mostly to describe amputations. The following list has been **derived** from ISPO standards, but has been modified so that each entry is unique.

This replaces the previous list which differentiated between Congenital and other causes of the amputation. QALS records this information elsewhere.

Abbreviation	New Terminology	Old Terminology
Upper		
PH	Partial Hand	Partial Hand
WD	Wrist Disarticulation	Through Wrist, Wrist Disarticulation
TR	Trans Radial	Below Elbow BE
ED	Elbow Disarticulation	Through Elbow, Elbow Disarticulation
TH	Trans Humeral	Above Elbow(AE)
SD	Shoulder Disarticulation	Shoulder Disarticulation, Through Shoulder
FQ	ForeQuarter Amputation	Forequarter Amputation, Scapuloa-Thoracic, Shoulder Cap prosthesis
CLSU	Congenital Limb Shortening Upper	
Lower Limb		
PF	Partial Foot	Chopart, Lis Franc
AD	Ankle Disarticulation	Symes, Ankle disarticulation
TT	Trans Tibial	Below Knee, BK
KD	Knee Disarticulation	Knee Disartic, Through Knee TK, Gritti-Stokes
TF	Trans Femoral	Above Knee – AK
HD	Hip Disarticulation	Hip Disarticulation, Canadian Hip
TP	Trans Pelvic	Hemi Pelvectomy, Hind Quarter
CLSL	Congenital Limb Shortening Lower	PFFD

⇒ **Partial Hand Amputation:** is the loss or part loss of the Hand (including all levels of the Thumb) below the Wrist Joint and above the Metacarpal-Phalangeal (MCP) joint.

⇒ **Partial Foot Amputation:** is the loss or part loss of the foot (including all levels of the Great Toe) below the ankle joint and above the Metatarsal-Phalangeal (MTP) joint.

QALS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Role

To act in an advisory capacity to QALS on issues related to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the service.

Terms of Reference

- To assist in the review of policies and procedures.
- To advise on the quality and level of prosthetic and related services.
- To participate in quality improvement activities.
- To represent the concerns of the clients and providers as appropriate.
- To address issues as may be periodically submitted by QALS management.

Membership

- Client representatives:
 - a veteran
 - a child amputee by parent/grandparent
 - a community representative
- Representatives from voluntary amputee support groups or associations
- Medical Officer involved in amputee rehabilitation representative.
- Amputee Clinic Coordinator representative.
- Health Practitioners involved in amputee rehabilitation representation.
- Representatives from the Prosthetic Service Providers (PSP).
- Representative for the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA - RAP)
- Manager of QALS (acts as Chairperson)

Appointment

- Appointed by QALS from submitted applications.
- Appointment is for a two year period, with annual review by QALS Manager for attendance and participation in meetings.
- Appointment may be terminated if the group / profession they are representing no longer considers them as their representative.
- Confirming letters of representation may be required at times e.g. following AGMs of support groups and new contracts of PSPs.
- Representatives may resign by choice at anytime.

Meetings

Are held quarterly on the third Monday of the month. Emergency and adhoc meetings may be called by the Chairperson.

OTHER CLIENTS

Compensation Clients

A number of amputees are either pursuing compensation or have received compensation from a third party. There are specific procedures to be applied to the provision of services to these clients whilst pursuing compensation and once a settlement is reached.

Essentially, once an individual receives compensation for their loss, expenses incurred to date on their behalf are recovered and a Future Prosthetic Service Cost Ceiling is established. These individuals cannot access QALS funding for prosthetic services until they have expended the costs identified, with proof of receipts. They may then apply to be readmitted to the 'free limb scheme' funded by Queensland Health.

QALS has a strict procedure to be followed whilst a client is pursuing compensation and to process an application for readmission to the Service.

Any queries related to this topic should be referred directly to the Manager

Interstate Visitors

As a courtesy to visiting Interstate amputees, QALS will provide essential emergency repairs to prosthesis of interstate amputees. QALS will decline to fund any service, which could well have been anticipated and carried out in the amputee's state of origin. This restriction does not apply to residents of other States who are current clients of QALS. Approval will be sought from the ALS in the state of origin and reimbursement of costs incurred may also be discussed prior to services being approved.

Overseas Visitors and Migrants

QALS will provide essential emergency repairs to prostheses, if at all possible and within reason, to amputees visiting from overseas or amputee migrants waiting for permanent residence status. This includes New Zealand and neighbouring Island Countries. QALS will not provide a replacement prosthesis unless client safety can be established and supported by a clinical assessment at an amputee clinic.

Department of Correctional Services

Amputees that are being held by the Department of Correctional Services are able to access prosthetic services if they are permanent residents of Australia.

Department of Veteran's Affairs Clients

DVA entitled clients eligible for prosthetic services funded through the Rehabilitation and Appliances Program (RAP) are processed through QALS to ensure a quality of service and management of entitlements are recorded .

PROSTHETIC SERVICE PROVIDERS (PSP)

PSP are also known as prosthetic manufacturers and private prosthetic companies.

PSP contact details

The following Prosthetic Service Providers are contracted under the 2008 Standing Offer Arrangement :-

1. Artificial Limb and Appliances

33 Jeays Street
Bowen Hills 4006 Brisbane
Tel: [07] 3252 8266
Attends metropolitan and Nambour clinics

2. Barry Leech Prosthetics & Orthotics

7 Pinter Drive
Southport 4215 Gold Coast
Tel: [07] 5532 0506
Attends metropolitan, Gold Coast and Cairns clinics

3. Brisbane Prosthetics & Orthotics

Unit 8, 107 Muriel Avenue
Moorooka 4105 Brisbane
Tel: [07] 3392 8440
Attends metropolitan, Toowoomba, Redcliffe, Gold Coast, Townsville and Mackay clinics

4. Goodwill Orthopaedics

222 Wishart Road
Wishart 4122 Brisbane
Tel: [07] 3849 8152
Attends metropolitan, Toowoomba, Gold Coast, Nambour, Maryborough, Bundaberg and Rockhampton clinics

5. Artificial Limb & Appliance Centre (limited services)

Townsville Health Service District - Tel: [07] 4799 9490

It should be noted that the PSPs may provide services from multiple sites, to obtain a full list of their operating locations, please contact the PSP directly.

Service Agreement with PSP

The relationship between the Prosthetic Service Providers (PSP) and QALS is governed by signed agreement finalised under a regulated Tender process.

In order to be recognised by QALS (and therefore Queensland Health) as a Prosthetic Service Provider, the manufacturer must submit the information required and agree to comply with the provisions of the “*Standing Offer Arrangements for the Provision of Prosthetic Services on Account of Queensland Amputee Limb Service (QALS)*” offered through Queensland Health.

The agreement amongst other things outlines the obligations of the manufacturers, the payment schedule, quality standard requirements, staffing qualifications and resources available.

When a party expresses interest in becoming a Prosthetic Service Provider to QALS, they must complete and submit the Offer documentation. The application is reviewed and assessed against the noted criteria and the applicant advised of the outcome.

Charges for prosthetic services

The amount paid by QALS for services is outlined in advance in the Standing Offer Arrangement. Once the government tender process is complete, a Signed Agreement between QALS and the Prosthetic Service Providers finalises the terms and conditions under which prosthetic services will be supplied to client's eligible for the ‘free limb scheme’ funded and administered by Queensland Health.

QALS allows a finite number of hours for the production of a prosthesis and/or its repair, whether major or minor. The components are limited to those currently listed on the QALS component list or approved for use by QALS.

QALS pays for approved consumable supplies at cost price with an allowance for shipping where needed.

Warranty

The services provided by the Prosthetic Service Providers (Manufacturers) are specifically covered by the Agreement between the Providers (PSP) and QALS.

Generally speaking, the following applies:

- ◆ The prosthesis or its major repair is warranted in relation to the materials used, the work performed as well as finish, fitting and alignment.

- ◆ Components used in the manufacturing process are held under the terms of their purchase warranty with an agreed minimum of 6 months on new components, unless otherwise stated by the component supplier.
- ◆ The PSP manufacturer's warranty applies for a period of 3 months for a new limb from the date of trial and 1 month for a major repair from the date of signed repair voucher.
- ◆ The warranty does not apply in cases of poor fitting resultant from changes in the client's medical condition, confirmed by a Medical Officer's report.
- ◆ The warranty does not cover damage caused by employment activities, accidental damage, normal wear and tear or changes due to tampering or modification undertaken by the client.

In the case where the client wilfully damages or tampers with the prosthesis, the client will be responsible for any repair costs arising.

Repairs – Major and Minor

QALS will fund repairs to the "Current" prosthesis of eligible clients, which are carried out by recognised Prosthetic Service Providers.

Major repairs:

A major repair is defined as a repair whose total cost [including parts and labour] will exceed \$750. Major repairs, which do not affect functionality, may be approved directly by QALS.

Prior to commencing work on a major repair, the Prosthetic Service Provider shall contact QALS for an approval number, which will be quoted on the invoice for services rendered.

In addition any major repair which exceeds \$1,500 and/or may affect the functionality of the prosthesis must be authorised by the QALS manager on a 'PSP Prosthetic Assessment Form' before any work can commence. It may also be necessary for the amputee to attend an amputee clinic for clinical assessment, depending on the reason and need for prosthetic services.

If an amputee attends a recognised amputee clinic for a clinical assessment and prosthetic services are identified as being required, the amputee will be required to attend the same amputee clinic for acquittal once all work has been finalised.

Minor repairs:

A minor repair is defined as a repair, whose total cost including parts and labour, is less than \$750.

No prior authorisation is required from QALS, however it should be noted that QALS does record all such repairs and unusual frequencies may be investigated.

“Current” prosthesis:

Please note that QALS will only fund repairs to an artificial limb which is considered “Current” by QALS. QALS will not fund any repairs to a limb which has been replaced by QALS (identified as “Expired” on QALS records) nor on a limb “unknown” to QALS.

Client Acceptance:

The Client is required to sign the repair Voucher (or acquittal form) where indicated as certification of their satisfaction with the service provided. The Client is to be provided with their copy of the Voucher and/or Acquittal form.

Supplies & Consumables

QALS provides various consumable supply items to eligible clients through the Prosthetic Service Providers. There are annual limits on many items and other items may require a supporting information from the PSP. The consumable list is reviewed annually.

Stump Socks

Clients may be provided with up to 12 socks per financial year, in either wool or cotton or a combination of both.

Sheaths

Nylon sheaths may be supplied upon a request by the PSP. Annual limit of 6 sheaths applies.

Silicone Sheaths may be provided where medically required and supported by the treating rehabilitation doctor. An annual limit of up to 4 per financial year may be authorised where necessary.

Cosmetic Stockings

Clients may be provided with 12 stockings per financial year.

Spare accessories

QALS recognises that in certain circumstances, such as isolation, etc, that it may be beneficial for the client to have certain spare accessories available (such as straps), with the proviso that these items in themselves cannot adversely affect the functionality of the prosthesis. Upon written request by the PSP, QALS may provide such items.

Unusual circumstances

QALS recognises that there may be individual medically indicated conditions or other situations wherein the stated annual limits may be inappropriate. The Manager may alter these allowances for an individual amputee based upon the information provided.

VOLUNTARY AMPUTEE ASSOCIATIONS IN QUEENSLAND

QALS recognises the vital advocacy and assistance role played by organised voluntary amputee support groups and nurtures strong working relationships with these bodies.

Amputees & Families Support Group Inc
PO Box 848, Springwood Qld 4127
Ph (07) 3290 4293

Amputees Advisory Association Incorporated
PO Box 966, Runaway Bay Qld 4216
Ph (07) 5577 3131

Amputee Support Assoc. Sunshine Coast Inc
PO Box 208, Wurtulla Qld 4551
Ph (07) 5476 6837

Queensland Amputee Golfing Association
81 Laura Street, Tweed Heads NSW 2485
Ph (07) 5524 8201



PO Box 244, West Burleigh Qld 4219
Ph (07) 5533 9754

Limbless Soldier's Association of Queensland
PO Box 45, New Farm Qld 4005
Ph (07) 3358 3155

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY CONSUMERS

“How do I access the Free Limb Scheme?”

QALS funds prosthetic services to all eligible clients, refer to Eligibility Procedure. Essentially, if you hold a Medicare card and are a permanent resident of Queensland, you are likely to be eligible for services through Queensland Health. You may contact QALS directly on (07) 3896 3770 to register for prosthetic services, or you may be referred onto QALS from an amputee clinics and/or prosthetic service provider. If you are transferring from another State where you have previously received prosthetic service, QALS will first obtain your file from that State ALS prior to approving any services.

“Where do I get information?”

Please contact any of the Voluntary Amputee Associations, Amputee Clinics or Prosthetic Manufacturer listed in this Manual, see contents. Alternatively please feel free to contact QALS directly.

“Can I choose which Clinic I attend?”

You may choose to attend any of the public hospital amputee clinics listed with QALS. However, your first appointment is usually made at the hospital, or through the hospital where you underwent your amputation. All current clinics accept requests for appointments without geographic limitation. However, it is strongly recommended that you establish a relationship with one amputee clinic to assist in the rehabilitation and management of your overall clinical needs as an amputee.

“If I am not happy with the Amputee Clinic’s recommendations, how can I change them?”

If you do not agree with the recommended treatment you are receiving, you may seek an alternative opinion via another amputee clinic. You will need to contact the clinic of your choice and make an appointment. Travel costs to and from outpatient appointments at the listed amputee clinics are usually at the client’s own expense and arrangements.

“How do I get a new prosthesis or repairs to my existing one?”

Phone and make an appointment with your chosen PSP or amputee clinic. All new or replacement prostheses must have a prosthetic assessment raised by a Prosthetist.

Major repairs, such as socket replacements or knee component replacements, will also need a prosthetic assessment form by the PSP.

Most minor repairs can be carried out by the prosthetic service provider (PSP).

“Do I need to attend both an amputee clinic outpatient appointment and see my PSP when I need a new limb?”

You may need to attend an amputee clinic for a supporting clinical assessment to assist the PSP with their prosthetic assessment if :-

- (i) you are in the first three years post amputation period;
- (ii) it has been six years since you last clinical assessment;
- (iii) your prosthesis / socket is not lasting the expected period of use;
- (iv) you are experiencing medical problems affecting the fit and use of your prosthesis;
- (v) you have recently received a new prosthesis or major repair and still experiencing problems with using your prosthesis;
- (vi) QALS or your Prosthetist (PSP) requests it.

“Am I free to choose my prosthetic manufacturer and how do I know which companies are contracted by QALS?”

As a registered client of QALS, you are free to choose your manufacturer from within the Prosthetic Service Providers (PSP) contracted to Queensland Health. A list of available manufacturers will be provided to you by QALS when you register for services. The list will provide you with the main locations and contact numbers of the currently contracted prosthetic manufacturers. If you are living outside the main metropolitan area of Brisbane you will have limited choice in PSP, if any. There is usually only one visiting PSP to each regional amputee clinics. If you do not wish to use the service provided in your area, you will most likely need to travel to Brisbane, which will be at your own expense.

The majority of the PSPs are located in Brisbane and one listed at the Gold Coast. As well as different PSPs travelling to the regional clinics, some companies also have extensions to their services in the non metropolitan areas, refer to the list. Where you have a choice available to you it is recommended you visit the premises or meet with the PSP before you make your choice, but this is not always possible.

Please be aware that once work has commenced (that is, a cast has been taken or actual work on the prosthesis has commenced) you are required to complete that episode of service with that PSP. After the warranty period for the services provided has expired or when your next replacement limb is required, you are free to change your manufacturer for ongoing repairs and services.

“How much will the prosthesis cost?”

There is no cost to eligible clients who are provided with a standard prosthesis, refer to the Eligibility Procedure. QALS has formal arrangements with the prosthetic manufacturers (PSPs) governing the payment for limbs.

“Who owns the limb?”

As it has been funded by Queensland Health, the artificial limb technically remains the property of the state government and must be returned to QALS upon

demand. However, the artificial limb is considered to be yours to care for and maintain in good condition. Expired or replaced prostheses will not be repaired or serviced by QALS. However you do not need to return expired limbs to QALS or the PSP, except on demand by QALS. If you no longer require your old prostheses you may give them to the PSP for disposal.

“Am I allowed to repair or modify the limb?”

All clients are specifically prohibited from making any changes, alterations and/or repairs which in any way could affect the function of the prosthesis. If you are having difficulty with your prosthesis, then please contact your manufacturer (PSP) and/or the amputee clinic. Please be aware that QALS will not fund any service resulting from a client’s tampering with the prosthesis, nor will it assume any responsibility for any outcome arising from the use of a prosthesis which has been tampered with by the client.

“Can I get a second prosthesis?”

QALS funding provision allows for only one (1) essential prosthesis per amputation, with expected use of a new prosthesis lasting three years. QALS does not automatically provide an emergency or second prosthesis. However, if you believe you have a strong case for consideration, a request can be made through your PSP or amputee clinic. Once it has been indicated to QALS that you are requesting an emergency limb for work, or other clinical reasons, a questionnaire will be sent to you. Based upon our available funding resources and in conjunction with current procedures, each such application will be considered on merit and need. Please refer to the procedure entitled “Provision of Second Limbs”.

“Does QALS provide artificial limbs for my sporting activities?”

QALS has no funding provision for recreational prostheses under any circumstances.

“If the prosthetic service provider or amputee clinic is not meeting my expectations to whom do I complain?”

Please refer to our Complaints Procedure. Generally, we recommend that in the first instance you would address the difficulty directly with the PSP or amputee clinic with which you are having concerns. If this does not resolve the issue, then please feel free to contact the Manager of QALS directly on [07] 3896 3770

“Will I be penalised by lodging a complaint?”

NO. QALS considers complaints as opportunities to improve the overall quality of service delivery. We also regularly survey clients who have used our service as another means to seek feedback. We do not know if there is a problem in some area, or if we are failing to meet the required services expectations, if no one tells us.

PROCEDURES

Acquittal of Prosthesis (Artificial Limb)

Amputee Clinic Recognition

Appeals

Child Amputee Limb Replacement

Client Biennial Satisfaction Survey

Client Responsibility

Client Service Evaluation

Complaints

Completion of Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) Form

Completion of PSP Assessment of Prosthetic Needs Form

Completion Time

Components

Eligibility

Home Visits by Prosthetic Service Providers

Identification of Limbs

Interim to Definitive Prosthesis

Processing Non Standard Prosthetic Requests

Prosthetic Disposal Procedure

Prosthetic Service Providers (PSP) Referral to Clinic

Second Issue / Emergency Prosthesis

Recognition of Medical Officer

Replacement of a Prosthesis

Weight and Prosthetic Component Limitations

ATTACHMENTS

Samples of Forms

Information Sheets

Scheduled Hours

Information Kit