

AIDING CLINICS IN CHAS CLAIM MANAGEMENT

BY AGENCY FOR INTEGRATED CARE



The Community Health Assist Scheme (CHAS) is a scheme by the Ministry of Health (MOH) that enables Singapore Citizens from lower- to middle-income households to receive subsidies for medical and dental care at participating clinics. CHAS has expanded significantly in recent years, and this could not have been possible without the increasing number of clinics and General Practitioners (GPs) participating in the scheme.

To ensure greater accountability on the use of public funds, auditors appointed by MOH conduct regular audits on CHAS clinics to ascertain compliance with CHAS guidelines. The CHAS audit covers clinical and financial aspects:

- **Clinical** — Clinics obtain patients' consent, and maintain proper patient medical records.
- **Financial** — Clinics make claims for subsidies in accordance with CHAS guidelines, and submit accurate data for each CHAS claim made.

HERE'S WHAT TO EXPECT FOR THE CHAS AUDIT PROCESS

What documents are required for the audit?

- **Patient's Consent Form** (with the following details from both patient and doctor: Names, NRIC/MCR, signatures and dates of signatures)
- **Doctor's clinical notes** for the visit submitted for specified CHAS claim

- **Laboratory results** relevant to the medical condition(s) for which CHAS claim was made
- **Prescription or clinical notes** with documentation of details of the drugs prescribed (e.g., name of drug, frequency, dose, duration)
- **Invoices/receipts** showing the itemised breakdown (medication(s), investigation (if any), consultation and total claim amount) of the bill(s) submitted for CHAS claim

When are CHAS audits conducted?

CHAS audits are conducted quarterly, i.e, four times a year, by polyclinic administrators or MOH appointed auditors. A formal notice will be sent to your clinic informing you of an upcoming audit, and you will be given two weeks to collate and submit the necessary documents.

What will happen if discrepancies are found during an audit of my clinic?

In the event that discrepancies are found during audit, an independent party may be commissioned by the polyclinic administrators/MOH to conduct further investigations if necessary. If serious non-compliance is determined, the polyclinics/MOH may issue a warning letter and/or terminate your clinic's CHAS-approved status.

If you have more questions on CHAS audit, please visit <https://pcps.gpcare.sg/Contents/Audit.aspx> or call AIC at 6632 1199 or send an email to gp@chas.sg

COMMON AUDIT PITFALLS

Making claims that are not approved under CHAS

These are not claimable under CHAS:

- Diagnosis that is not listed on CHAS Online
- All other fees charged besides consultation, investigation and prescriptions relating to the diagnosed condition that is covered by CHAS
- Lifestyle drugs, sedatives/hypnotics, non-HSA approved medications
- Vitamins and health supplements, unless there is documentation/evidence of deficiency related to the claimable chronic condition

Including unrelated tests in laboratory packages for treating chronic health conditions

Tests such as blood grouping and cancer screening that are irrelevant to the treatment of the acute and/or chronic conditions in question should be separated from the package for which CHAS claims are made.

Not providing a clear breakdown of bills according to categories

Submitted bills should clearly state the consultation, medications and investigations components, on top of the total claim amount. The breakdown on the bills should correspond to what is submitted to CHAS Online.

Submitting insufficient or incomplete information

Providing all the documents/information required for the audit would avoid the need for the audit team to seek further clarifications or request additional submissions from your clinic. Some tips for good documentation practice:

- Keep a clear and complete professional record of the patient's consultations and management plans
- Ensure that patient consent forms were properly completed and signed
- Document the patient's clinical indicators for chronic diseases as per CDMP/CHAS guidelines
- Maintain accurate financial records



SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Dr Lui Weng Sun & Ms Corinne Tan, both from Kallang Medical Centre (a member of Northeast Medical Group), share their CHAS audit experience.

“The whole CHAS audit process was actually quite simple and straightforward, because when we joined the scheme, we were advised by the CHAS GP Team on the records we needed to keep. So the moment we have a new CHAS patient, we make sure we get as much information as possible from the patient, collate all the necessary documentation and keep our records in order.

By doing that consistently for every patient, it's much easier to prepare for an audit as everything is properly documented. Sometimes when the clinic gets busy, we make it a point to tidy up our case notes at the end of the day.

I usually type up my notes as I know that handwritten notes can be hard to read. It helps a lot that we use a computerised system to store our patient records, so we can retrieve the information any time.”

— Dr Lui Weng Sun



“We were nervous during our first CHAS audit, so it's great that the CHAS audit team was very patient in guiding us through the process.

One problem we encountered is that some of our patients who wish to obtain medication for their chronic conditions do not want to undergo tests, such as blood tests, for our records. For that, we can only encourage them to take the tests and note their reasons for declining.

We also have patients who request for items such as acne cream and birth control pills, which cannot be claimed under CHAS. As such, patients need to be educated that CHAS is meant for acute and chronic health conditions, and not for aesthetic purposes or personal over-the-counter medications.”

— Ms Corinne Tan

