

Care for **safe** and **reliable** information!

Less than one century ago, most people rarely left their own village or town. That was where they had their doctor, who knew everyone personally, as well as all the pharmacists and specialists in the area. Communication was often face to face or through letters. Nowadays, people are much more mobile and distances can be covered increasingly faster. Electronic communication plays a growing role in our society. Next to familiar channels of communication, new and quicker ways of sending or sharing information are constantly emerging. In this respect, we see developments in healthcare focussed on making information available on a quick and non-location specific basis, using the internet as a channel of communication. The electronic medication record and electronic prescription system are examples of these developments. These applications have contributed to further the quality and efficiency of patient care. As healthcare information relating to general privacy contains sensitive information, it must be carefully protected, and patients must be confident of this. It must be clear who reads, sends or receives information. Assurance in this respect can be provided by the Unique Healthcare Practitioner Identification Register, known through its Dutch acronym as the UZI-register.



What is the UZI-register?

The UZI-register is the organisation that provides unique identification for healthcare practitioners in the Netherlands. The unique form of identification is provided by the UZI-register to healthcare practitioners in the form of an UZI-card, a kind of electronic passport. The UZI-register processes the application, production and issue of the UZI-card. The UZI-register is part of the Central Agency for Information on Healthcare Professions, an agency of the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports.

What is the UZI-card?

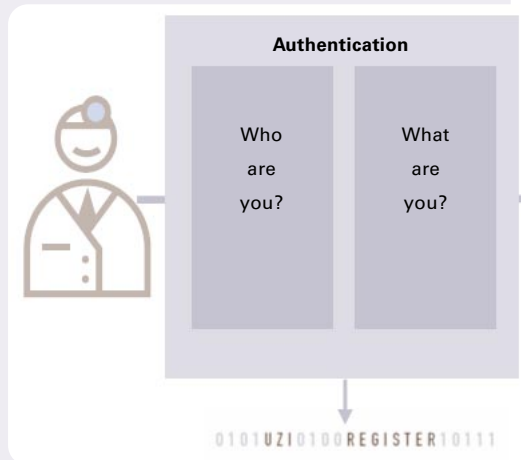
The UZI-card constitutes a key condition for secure electronic communication and consultation of confidential information by healthcare practitioners. Just like the regular passport, it is an important individual 'value document'. The UZI-card looks like a bank pass. It contains the electronic identity of a healthcare practitioner, which is protected against misuse. That is why the UZI-card, just like a bank pass, is provided with a unique pin code.



What possibilities does the UZI-card have?

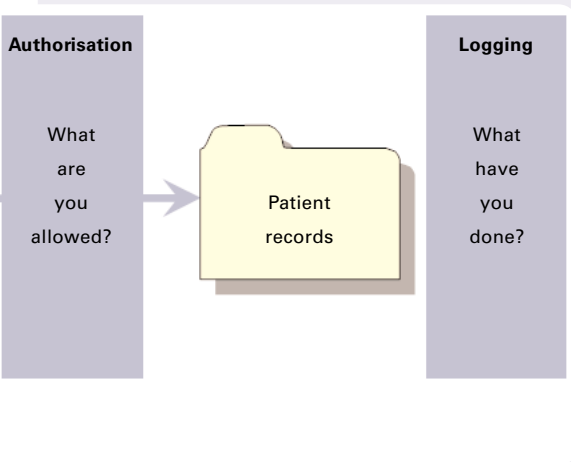
Healthcare practitioners can use the UZI-card to provide authentication, to guarantee confidential communication or to add an electronic signature.

Authentication is particularly important when the healthcare practitioner requires access to, for example, an information system or website. With the help of an UZI-card healthcare practitioners can provide authentication, meaning they can prove their identity. The UZI-card also certifies that the pass holder is a healthcare provider and indicates whether he or she provides treatment on behalf of a healthcare institution. Owning an UZI-card is nonetheless not in all cases sufficient to automatically gain access to healthcare information. To access healthcare information, authorisation must also take place. That means that access must actually be granted. The UZI-card does not say who is entitled to what information, but it does contain details on which basis authority can be granted.



In addition to authentication, the UZI-card fulfils a function to ensure confidential communication. The confidentiality function of the UZI pass guarantees the sender of the information that it can only be read by the person to whom it is sent, preventing anyone else from reading or changing this information.

Finally the UZI-card can be used to guarantee irrefutability. That means that a healthcare provider can add an electronic signature to a receipt, reference or contract, for example. The electronic signature that is possible with the UZI-card has the same function and value as a signature on paper. The UZI-register has been certified and registered by the Independent Post & Telecommunications Authority (OPTA) to emit a legal electronic signature.



Why can **the UZI-card** be trusted?

All UZI-cards have to be subjected to a meticulous registration and issuance process before they can be used. Before healthcare practitioners are registered, the UZI-register checks they fulfil the criteria for recognition as healthcare providers. UZI-cards are produced in a heavily protected environment. Before the UZI-card is issued the physical and legal identity of the holder is checked. That means that the intended cardholder must personally collect the UZI-card and must present a legal form of identification, such as a passport. These measures allow the UZI-register to extend the guarantees covering the electronic identity of the cardholder.

On its website the UZI-register publishes which UZI-cards have been issued and which cards are no longer valid. This allows the recipient of a message sent using the UZI-card to check the reliability of its contents. The UZI-card is also a verifiable means of authentication for protected access to electronically stored data.

The UZI-register's activities conform to the applicable European and Dutch legislation and regulations. Furthermore, the UZI-register adheres to various European and international standards developed in different areas, such as technology. The UZI-register is certified, meaning that an independent auditor has established that it complies with the required standards. The UZI-cards will be issued under the responsibility of the State of the Netherlands.



For who is **the UZI-card** intended?

Owing to the confidential nature of healthcare information, it has to be carefully protected. It is important that only healthcare providers can have access to people's healthcare details, and this must be subject to strict conditions. That is why only providers of healthcare are entitled to UZI-cards.

The healthcare providers group contains healthcare practitioners and institutions. When registering healthcare institutes, the UZI-register employs the criteria from the Quality of Healthcare Institutions Act. Healthcare practitioners refers to all professional practitioners as intended in Article 3 or Article 34 of the Individual Health Care Professions Act, known through the Dutch acronym as the BIG Act.

Because healthcare providers within healthcare processes can have different roles, the UZI-register also has different types of UZI-cards. There is one type of UZI-card for healthcare practitioners, which is issued to healthcare practitioners for the purposes described. These healthcare practitioners can be active in a healthcare institute or work on an individual basis. In addition to the UZI-card for the healthcare provider, the UZI-register also distributes 'registered employee' and 'non-registered employee' cards. These cards are issued to employees of a healthcare institution or assistants to an individual healthcare practitioner. The registered employee card is issued by the UZI-register to the employee. The unregistered employee card is issued by the UZI-register to the healthcare institute or healthcare provider. The healthcare institute or healthcare provider gives the card to an employee and keeps a record of which employees hold this card. Finally the UZI-register emits an electronic identity for systems of healthcare providers (such as software, servers of websites). These are designated as services.



What do you need to be able to use the **UZI-card**?

The UZI-card is necessary to assign unique identification to healthcare providers in electronic traffic. An UZI-card by itself is not sufficient. The healthcare provider also needs to have a card reader attached to the PC to be able to actually use the UZI-card. In order to make access to healthcare information using the UZI-card possible, the systems containing the healthcare information have to be adapted. They must be able to read the electronic identity, authorisation based on the UZI-card must be possible and actions carried out must be logged with the help of the UZI-card. It is also important that the surroundings in which the UZI-card is used are reliable and well secured.

More information?

If you require further information,
please visit the website of the UZI-register:

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