

Individual Allied Health Services under Medicare

Overview

Medicare benefits (under MBS Items 10950 to 10970) are available for services provided by eligible allied health professionals to people with chronic conditions and complex care needs who are being managed by a GP under certain Chronic Disease Management (CDM) Medicare items.

A **maximum of 5 allied health services per 12 month calendar year** is available. Services can be made up of one type of service, or a combination of different types.

A **Medicare rebate of \$52.95 per allied health service** will apply, with out-of-pocket costs counting towards the extended Medicare safety net. If a provider accepts the Medicare benefit as full payment for the service, there will be no out-of-pocket cost for the patient. If not, they will have to pay the difference between the fee charged and the Medicare rebate. Allied health professionals are free to determine their own fees for the professional service and charges in excess of the Medicare benefit are the responsibility of the patient.

Patient Eligibility

Eligible patients have a chronic condition and complex care needs that are being managed by their GP under a GP Management Plan AND Team Care Arrangements. Alternatively, for patients who are permanent residents of an aged care facility, their GP must have contributed to, or contributed to a review of, a multidisciplinary care plan prepared for them by the aged care facility (MBS Item 731).

Note: The allied health services provided through these referrals must be directly related to the management of the patient's chronic condition and the need for allied health services must be identified in the patient's care plan.

Eligible Allied Health Professionals

The allied health professional providing the service may be part of the planning team convened by the GP to manage a patient's chronic condition and complex care needs as part of Team Care Arrangements. However, the service may also be provided by an allied health professional who is not part of the planning team, provided that the service has been identified as necessary by the patient's GP and recommended in their care plan. Allied health providers need to meet specific eligibility requirements, be in private practice and register with Medicare Australia.

The eligible allied health professionals include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners
- Aboriginal health workers
- Audiologists
- Chiropractors
- Diabetes educators
- Dietitians
- Exercise physiologists
- Mental health workers
- Occupational therapists
- Osteopaths
- Physiotherapists
- Podiatrists
- Psychologists
- Speech pathologists

Referral Process

Referrals must be made using the Department of Health's *Referral Form for Individual Allied Health Services under Medicare for patients with a chronic medical condition and complex care needs*, shown on the following pages, or a referral form that contains all the components of the form. When referring a patient to more than one allied health professional, a separate referral form for each referral is required. The referral form is available from the GP partners Australia website at www.gppaustralia.org.au/cdm.

It is not appropriate for allied health providers to provide part-completed referral forms to GPs for signature, or to preempt the GP's decision about the services required by the patient.

Referral Validity

A referral is valid for the stated number of services. If all services are not used during the calendar year in which the patient was referred, the unused services can be used in the next calendar year. However, those services will be counted towards the five rebates for allied health services available to the patient during that calendar year. When all referred services have been used, or a referral to a different allied health provider is required, patients need to obtain a new referral.

It is not necessary to have a new GPMP or TCAs prepared each calendar year in order to access a new referral(s) for eligible allied health services. Patients continue to be eligible for rebates for allied health services while they are being managed under a GPMP and TCAs as long as the need for eligible services continues to be recommended in their plan.

Allied Health Professional Reporting

The allied health professionals are to provide a written report on the service to the referring practitioner after the first and last service, or more often if clinically necessary. Written reports should include any investigations, tests, and/or assessments carried out on the patient, any treatment provided and future management of the patient's condition or problem.

Finding Allied Health Professionals

Local allied health professionals can be found for patient referrals by searching the allied health professional association websites. To register with Medicare Australia and be eligible to provide individual allied health services under Medicare, allied health professionals must meet the specific eligibility requirements and professional memberships / registrations.

Audiologists

An audiologist must be either:

- 'Full Member' of the Audiological Society of Australia Inc, who holds a 'Certificate of Clinical Practice'; or
- 'Ordinary Member - Audiologist' or 'Fellow Audiologist' of the Australian College of Audiology.

Audiology Australia (incorporated as Audiological Society of Australia) have produced a directory for those seeking the professional services of an Audiologist in South Australia. The directory of services is available from www.audiology.asn.au > Public > Audiology Service Directories.

Chiropractors

Chiropractor must be registered with the **Chiropractic Board of Australia**. Chiropractors Association of Australia include a 'Locate a Chiropractor' search facility on their website at www.chiropractors.asn.au.

Note: Registration with the Chiropractic Board of Australia can be checked at www.chiropracticboard.gov.au.

Diabetes Educators

Diabetes educator must be a Credentialed Diabetes Educator (CDE) as credentialed by the **Australian Diabetes Educators Association (ADEA)**.

The ADEA website includes a 'Find a CDE' search function that may be used to locate CDEs.

Searches for CDEs can be made based on postcode/suburb, name, consultation type, language and if they are a registered provider for Medicare, DVA or private health insurers.

Visit the ADEA website at www.adea.com.au.

Dietitians

A dietitian must be an Accredited Practising Dietitian as recognised by the **Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA)**.

The 'Find an Accredited Practising Dietitian' function on the DAA website can be used to search for local dietitians.

Visit the DAA website at www.daa.asn.au.

Exercise Physiologists

Accredited exercise physiologists (AEPs) specialise in the delivery of exercise for the prevention and management of chronic diseases and injuries.

Exercise physiologists must be an Accredited Exercise Physiologist (AEP) as accredited by **Exercise and Sports Science Australia (ESSA)** to be eligible to register with Medicare.

The 'Find an AEP Near You' online search facility on the ESSA website can be used to find a local accredited exercise physiologist to refer patients that require physical activity or exercise intervention.

Visit the ESSA website at www.essa.org.au.

Mental Health Workers

"Many physical health conditions increase the risk of mental illness, while poor mental health is known to increase the risk of diseases such as heart disease, stroke and cancer. Comorbidity of physical illness and mental health issues impacts on whether people seek help, diagnosis and treatment, and impacts on their physical and mental recovery. Good mental health is a protective factor in prevention and self-management of chronic disease."

Australian College of Mental Health Nurses (ACMHN), 2013

'Mental health' can include services provided by members of any of the five following professional groups:

- psychologists;
- mental health nurses;
- occupational therapists;
- social workers;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners / Aboriginal health workers.

Psychologists, occupational therapists, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners and Aboriginal health workers are eligible in separate categories for individual allied health services under Medicare.

Mental Health Nurse – A mental health nurse must be a credentialed mental health nurse, as certified by the **Australian College of Mental Health Nurses (ACMHN)**. Credentialed Mental Health Nurses can be found throughout Australia by searching by state / territory listed on the College website. Visit the ACMHN website at www.acmhn.org > Credentialed > Credentialed MHNs.

Social Workers – A social worker must be a 'Member' of the **Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW)** and be certified by AASW as meeting the standards for mental health set out in the document published by AASW titled 'Practice Standards for Mental Health Social Workers' as in force on 8 November 2008. Visit the AASW website at www.aasw.asn.au > Information for the community > Find a social worker, to locate social workers AASW members by name, location and services offered.

Occupational Therapists

Occupational Therapy focuses on enabling people to live satisfying and meaningful lives by helping them participate in the occupations they want to do, need to do and are expected to do. The term occupation refers to activities of everyday life including self-care (bathing, dressing, grooming, toileting, feeding), household (cooking, cleaning, shopping), community involvement, work or study and leisure / recreation pursuits.

Occupational therapist must be registered with the **Occupational Therapy Board of Australia**.

Occupational Therapy Australia is the professional association for occupational therapists in Australia. The association website, available at www.otaus.com.au, includes a 'Find an OT' facility that can be used to search an Australia-wide directory of Occupational Therapists in private practice.

Note: *Occupational Therapy Australia membership does not automatically deem members eligible for National Registration. Registration can be checked at www.ahpra.gov.au/occupational-therapy.aspx.*

Osteopaths

Osteopathy is a form of manual healthcare which recognises the link between the structure of the body and the way it functions. Osteopaths focus on how the skeleton, joints, muscles, nerves, circulation, connective tissue and internal organs function as a holistic unit.

Osteopathy Australia is the peak body representing the interests of osteopaths. Their website at www.osteopathy.org.au provides a 'Find your local Osteopath' search facility.

Osteopath must be registered with the Osteopathy Board of Australia to be eligible to provide services under Medicare. Registration can be checked at www.osteopathyboard.gov.au.

Physiotherapists

Physiotherapists must be registered with the **Physiotherapy Board of Australia**, www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au.

The **Australian Physiotherapy Association** website includes a search function for finding physiotherapists in the local area by name, location, interest, language and treatments.

Visit the Australian Physiotherapy Association website at www.physiotherapy.asn.au.

Podiatrists

Podiatrist must be registered with the **Podiatry Board of Australia**, www.podiatryboard.gov.au.

The **Australasian Podiatry Council**, incorporating the Australian Podiatry Associations, maintain a searchable database of podiatrists on the website www.FindaPodiatrist.org. Searches can be made by postcode, suburb, additional services and languages.

Psychologists

The **Australian Psychological Society (APS)** website includes a 'Find a Psychologist' service that provides help in finding a psychologist to suit your needs. The database includes of more than 2,600 APS registered psychologists around Australia. Visit www.psychology.org.au.

Note: *Psychologist must hold General Registration with the **Psychology Board of Australia**. Registration can be checked at www.psychologyboard.gov.au.*

Speech Pathologists

Speech pathology, is the diagnosis, management and treatment of individuals who are unable to communicate effectively or who have difficulty with feeding and swallowing e.g. children who fail to develop normal communication or people who acquire communication disabilities as a result of disease, injury or a stroke.

Speech pathologist must be a 'Practising Member' of **Speech Pathology Australia**.

The 'Find a Speech Pathologist' search facility on the Speech Pathology Australia website at www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au can be used to locate speech pathologists in your area including by practice type, clinical population and services or area of special interest.

Referral Form for Individual Allied Health Services under Medicare

The form below is available from the Country SA PHN website at www.countrysaphn.com.au/healthprofessionals/resources.



Referral Form for Individual Allied Health Services under Medicare for patients with a chronic medical condition and complex care needs

Note: GPs can use this form issued by the Department of Health or one that contains all of the components of this form.

To be completed by referring GP:

Please tick:

- Patient has GP Management Plan (item 721) AND Team Care Arrangements (item 723) OR
 GP has contributed to or reviewed a multidisciplinary care plan prepared by the patient's residential aged care facility (item 731)

Note: GPs are encouraged to attach a copy of the relevant part of the patient's care plan to this form.

GP details

Provider Number

Name

Address Postcode

Patient details

Medicare Number Patient's ref no.

First Name Surname

Address Postcode

Allied Health Provider (AHP) patient referred to: (Please specify name or type of AHP)

Name

Address Postcode

Referral details - Please use a separate copy of the referral form for each type of service

Eligible patients may access Medicare rebates for a maximum of 5 allied health services (total) in a calendar year. Please indicate the number of services required by writing the number in the 'No. of services' column next to the relevant AHP.

No of services	AHP Type	Item Number	No of services	AHP Type	Item Number	No of services	AHP Type	Item Number
	Aboriginal Health Worker/Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner	10950		Exercise Physiologist	10953		Podiatrist	10962
	Audiologist	10952		Mental Health Worker	10956		Psychologist	10968
	Chiropractor	10964		Occupational Therapist	10958		Speech Pathologist	10970
	Diabetes Educator	10951		Osteopath	10966			
	Dietitian	10954		Physiotherapist	10960			

Referring General Practitioner's signature Date signed

The AHP must provide a written report to the patient's GP after the first and last service, and more often if clinically necessary.

Allied health providers should retain this referral form for record keeping and Department of Human Services (Medicare) audit purposes.

This form may be downloaded from the Department of Health website at www.health.gov.au/mbsprimarycareitems

THE FORM DOES NOT HAVE TO ACCOMPANY MEDICARE CLAIMS