

## Overview

A medical practitioner can utilise an MBS health assessment item to undertake a more comprehensive assessment of a patient with complex care needs. Health assessments also permit the needs of specific groups (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, refugees and aged care residents) to be addressed in a targeted and culturally appropriate manner.

This section provides information for medical practitioners, practice nurses and registered Aboriginal health workers on the following MBS health assessment items.

- MBS Item 715 – A health assessment available to all people of **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent**.
- MBS items 701, 703, 705 and 707 – **Time-based health assessment** items available for specific target groups.
- MBS Item 10986 – a **Healthy Kids Check provided by a practice nurse** or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner, on behalf of a medical practitioner.

## Time-based Health Assessment Items (Item 701 – 707)

Medical practitioners may use one of the time based MBS health assessment items (**MBS Items 701, 703, 705, 707**) to provide a health assessment service to a member of any of the target groups listed in the table below.

Target Groups and Frequency of Service	
Target Group	Frequency of Service
<b>Healthy Kids Check</b> for children aged at least 3 years and less than 5 years of age, who have received or who are receiving their 4 year old immunisation	Once only
<b>Type 2 diabetes risk evaluation</b> for people aged 40-49 years (inclusive) with a high risk of developing type 2 diabetes as determined by the Australian Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment Tool (AUSDRISK)	Once every three years
<b>Health assessment for people aged 45-49 years</b> (inclusive) who are at risk of developing chronic disease	Once only
<b>Health assessment for people aged 75 years and older</b>	Annually
<b>Comprehensive Medical Assessment</b> for permanent residents of residential aged care facilities	Annually
<b>People with an Intellectual Disability</b>	Annually
<b>Refugees and Other Humanitarian Entrants</b>	Once only
<b>Former serving members of the Australian Defence Force</b>	Once only

The health assessment item that is selected will depend on the time take to complete the health assessment service. This is determined by the complexity of the patient’s presentation and the specific requirements that have been established for each target group eligible for health assessments.

<b>Item Numbers and Descriptions</b>	
<b>MBS Item Number</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Item 701 Brief Health Assessment</b>	A simple health assessment. The health assessment should take not more than 30 minutes to complete.
<b>Item 703 Standard Health Assessment</b>	A straightforward assessment where the patient does not present with complex health issues but may require more attention than can be provided in a brief assessment. The assessment lasts more than 30 minutes but takes less than 45 minutes.
<b>Item 705 Long Health Assessment</b>	An extensive assessment, where the patient has a range of health issues that require more in-depth consideration, and longer-term strategies for managing the patient’s health may be necessary. The assessment lasts at least 45 minutes but less than 60 minutes.
<b>Item 707 Prolonged Health Assessment</b>	A prolonged health assessment is used for a complex assessment of a patient with significant, long-term health needs that need to be managed through a comprehensive preventive health care plan. The assessment takes 60 minutes or more to complete.

## Components

<b>Health assessments are generally made up of the following elements:</b>
a) information collection, including taking a patient history and undertaking or arranging examinations and investigations as required;
b) making an overall assessment of the patient;
c) recommending appropriate interventions;
d) providing advice and information to the patient;
e) keeping a record of the health assessment, and offering the patient a written report about the health assessment, with recommendations about matters covered by the health assessment; and
f) offering the patient’s carer (if any, and if the medical practitioner considers it appropriate and the patient agrees) a copy of the report or extracts of the report relevant to the carer.

Specific requirements when providing a time-based health assessment for each of the target groups is available from MBS Online at [www.mbsonline.gov.au](http://www.mbsonline.gov.au).

## Practice Nurse Assistance

Practice nurses and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners may assist GPs in performing a health assessment, in accordance with accepted medical practice and under the supervision of the GP.

This may include activities associated with:

- information collection, including gathering of patient information for the medical practitioner and the taking and recording of routine measurements; and
- providing patients with information about recommended interventions at the direction of the GP.

All other components of the health assessment must include personal attendance by the GP.

**Note:** The time needed to undertake the aspects above of the health assessment by the practice nurse or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner may be added to the time taken by the GP to complete the assessment.

The medical practitioner should be satisfied that the assisting health professional has the necessary skills, expertise and training to collect the information required for the health assessment.

## Resources

### Medicare Health Assessment Resource Kit

A Medicare Health Assessment Resource Kit is available on the Department of Health website at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au). The kit includes fact sheets, question and answer sheets, and proformas for each of the health assessments.

### RACGP Guidelines for preventative activities in General Practice (2012)

The *Guidelines for preventative activities in general practice* 8th edition (the Red Book) is a synthesis of evidence-based guidelines from Australian and international sources and provides recommendations for everyday use in general practice.

The red book provides a single entry point to common conditions seen in Australian general practice and offers practical advice on the kind of screening and services that should be provided to the general population.

The Red Book can be viewed and downloaded from the RACGP website at [www.racgp.org.au/guidelines/redbook](http://www.racgp.org.au/guidelines/redbook).

### MBS Online

Further information on the Medicare requirements and the rebates for each health assessment item is available from the MBS Online at [www.mbsonline.gov.au](http://www.mbsonline.gov.au).