



## Continuing MBS Telehealth Services

### GPs and Other Medical Practitioners

Last updated: 15 December 2021

- MBS telehealth introduced on a temporary basis in response to the COVID-19 pandemic will now be permanent. Telehealth services provided by GPs, medical practitioners, nurse practitioners, participating midwives, allied health providers and dental practitioners in the practice of oral and maxillofacial surgery services will continue.
- It remains a legislative requirement that GPs and Other Medical Practitioners (OMPs) working in general practice can only perform a telehealth service where they have an established clinical relationship with the patient, with limited exemptions.
- A service may only be provided by telehealth where it is safe and clinically appropriate to do so.
- Bulk billed GP and OMP COVID-19 telehealth services are eligible for incentive payments when provided to Commonwealth concession card holders and children under 16 years of age.
- All providers are expected to obtain informed financial consent from patients prior to charging private fees for telehealth services.

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### Why are the changes being made?

- From 1 January 2022 the COVID-19 GP and OMP telehealth arrangements introduced 1 July 2021, including short and longer telephone items, will continue to be available with the following changes:
  - A new extended telephone consultation item for attendances 20 minutes or longer for patients in rural and remote communities (Modified Monash 6 and 7 regions) will be introduced.
  - The COVID-19 GP 'hotspot' telephone items for consultations longer than 20 minutes will cease.
  - Patients who are subject to COVID-19 public health orders requiring isolation or quarantine will continue to have unrestricted access to MBS telehealth services, without needing to demonstrate an established clinical relationship with their telehealth provider.
  - Specific GP nicotine and smoking cessation services including telehealth will be extended to 31 December 2023. GP sexual and reproductive health services and non-directive pregnancy support counselling will be extended to 30 June 2023. These services do not require an established clinical relationship when provided by telehealth.
  - MBS telehealth items will be included in the calculation of Practice Incentives Program (PIP) and the Workforce Incentive Program - Practice Stream (WIP) payments.



- Medicare compliance rules will be updated to include telephone and video services in the prescribed pattern of practice (the 80/20 rule), with a new '30/20' rule for GP telephone services.
- Superseded pre-COVID telehealth and associated items will be removed from the MBS to avoid multiple different MBS items for the same service. This includes GP and OMP mental health consultations and general attendances by video. GP and OMP patient-end support items linked to pre-COVID medical specialist and consultant physician telehealth services will also be removed from 1 January 2021.
- Nurse practitioner, midwifery, nursing and other allied health telehealth consultations will continue without change, with the exception of patient-end support services by nurse practitioners and midwives linked to pre-COVID medical specialist and consultant physician.

## Who is eligible?

The MBS telehealth items are available to providers of telehealth services for a wide range of consultations. All Medicare eligible Australians can receive these services if they have an established clinical relationship with a GP, OMP, or a medical practice. This requirement supports longitudinal and person-centred primary health care that is associated with better health outcomes.

An *established relationship* means the medical practitioner performing the service:

- has provided at least one face-to-face service to the patient in the 12 months preceding the telehealth attendance; or
- is located at a medical practice where the patient has had at least one face-to-face service arranged by that practice in the 12 months preceding the telehealth attendance (including services performed by another doctor located at the practice, or a service performed by another health professional located at the practice, such as a practice nurse or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health worker); or
- is a participant in the Approved Medical Deputising Service program, and the Approved Medical Deputising Service provider employing the medical practitioner has a formal agreement with a medical practice that has provided at least one face-to-face service to the patient in the 12 months preceding the telehealth attendance.
- The established relationship requirement is a rolling requirement applying to every telehealth consultation. For each telehealth consultation, the patient must meet one of the eligibility requirements outline above, unless one of the following exemptions applies.



The *established relationship* requirement does not apply to:

- children under the age of 12 months;
- people who are homeless;
- patients receiving an urgent after-hours (unsociable hours) service; or
- patients of medical practitioners at an Aboriginal Medical Service or an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service; or
- people who are in a COVID-19 Commonwealth declared hotspot, until 31 December 2021; or
- people isolating because of a COVID-related State or Territory public health order, or in COVID-19 quarantine because of a State or Territory public health order.

AND patients accessing specific MBS items for:

- blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health consultations; and
- pregnancy counselling services;
- mental health services; and
- nicotine and smoking cessation counselling.

A patient's participation in a previous telehealth consultation does not constitute a face-to-face service for the purposes of ongoing telehealth eligibility. New patients of a practice and regular patients who have not attended the practice face to face in the preceding 12 months must have a face-to-face attendance if they do not satisfy the above exemptions. Subsequent services may be provided by telehealth, if safe and clinically appropriate to do so.

Practitioners should confirm that patients have received an eligible face-to-face attendance in the preceding 12 months, or meet one or more of the relevant exemption criteria for the service, prior to providing a telehealth attendance. Failure to meet the established relationship requirement may result in incorrect claiming.

## What telehealth options are available?

Videoconference services are the preferred approach for substituting a face-to-face consultation. However, providers can also offer audio-only services via telephone where clinically appropriate. There are separate items available for the audio-only services.



No specific equipment is required to provide Medicare-compliant telehealth services. Practitioners must ensure that their chosen telecommunications solution meets their clinical requirements and satisfies privacy laws. To assist providers with their privacy obligations, a privacy checklist for telehealth services has been made available on MBSOnline:

<http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/Factsheet-TelehealthPrivChecklist>. Further information can be found on the [Australian Cyber Security Centre website](#).

## What does this mean for providers?

The MBS telehealth items allow providers to deliver essential health care services to their patients while ensuring continued quality is provided by a medical practitioner who knows the patient's medical history.

Providers do not need to be in their regular practice to provide telehealth services, but they must ensure that the established clinical relationship, as defined in the MBS, exists before providing telehealth services to their patient. Providers should use their provider number for their primary location, and must provide safe services in accordance with normal professional standards.

The MBS telehealth items have the same clinical requirements as the corresponding face-to-face consultation items. As Medicare regulations are progressively updated, telehealth items will list a rebate that is 100% of the equivalent face-to-face fee.

Telehealth services will now contribute to Standardised Whole Patient Equivalent (SWPE) calculations which determine the value of PIP and WIP payments. Including telehealth into the SWPE ensures that payments that support quality improvement activities and subsidies for allied health workers reflect contemporary practice.

To date, a range of audit and education activities have safeguarded appropriate billing of MBS claims. To further support the integrity of the Medicare program the existing prescribed pattern of practice (80/20 rule) will now apply to all GP consultation types from 1 January 2022. Any GP who provides more than a combined 80 services by face-to-face, video or telephone on 20 or more days in a 12 month period will be referred to the Professional Services Review (PSR).

In addition, a new 30/20 rule will be introduced for telephone consultations from 1 January 2022. Any GP or consultant physicians who provides more than 30 telephone consultations on 20 or more days in a 12 month period will be referred to the PSR.

## How will these changes affect patients?

Patients will continue to have access to MBS telehealth services, noting that the current eligibility requirements for these services will continue from 1 January 2022.



A change to the range of GP telehealth services from 1 January 2022 will mean that higher MBS rebates are available for telephone consultations lasting 20 minutes or more for eligible patients in remote and very remote regions (Modified Monash 6 and 7).

Patients in designated COVID-19 'hotspot' areas will have normal eligibility requirements for telehealth services from 1 January 2022. This means patients must have an established clinical relationship unless they satisfy criteria for an exemption to this requirement, or are accessing specific services that are exempt from this requirement.

Patient-end support services by GPs and OMPs linked to pre-COVID specialist video consultations in regional and remote areas will be removed from 1 January 2022. However, optometry, practice nurse and Aboriginal health worker patient-end support items will be retained. Other MBS items continue to support multidisciplinary care and case-conferences with specific items for GP, specialists and allied health providers, where appropriate.

## Who was consulted on the changes?

Consultation with stakeholders has informed the introduction and refinement of MBS telehealth items. The transition to permanent arrangements has also been informed by medical experts and key stakeholders within the health sector.

## How will the changes be monitored and reviewed?

The Department of Health continues to monitor the use of the new MBS items. Use of the items that does not seem to be in accordance with Medicare guidelines and legislation will be actioned appropriately.

## Where can I find more information?

The full item descriptors and information on other changes to the MBS can be found on the MBS Online website at [www.mbsonline.gov.au](http://www.mbsonline.gov.au). You can also subscribe to future MBS updates by visiting [MBS Online](#) and clicking 'Subscribe'.

The Department of Health provides an email advice service for providers seeking advice on interpretation of the MBS items and rules and the Health Insurance Act and associated regulations. If you have a query relating exclusively to interpretation of the Schedule, you should email [askMBS@health.gov.au](mailto:askMBS@health.gov.au).

If you are seeking advice in relation to Medicare billing, claiming, payments, or obtaining a provider number, please go to the Health Professionals page on the Services Australia website or contact Services Australia on the Provider Enquiry Line – 13 21 50.



# MBS changes factsheet

*Please note that the information provided is a general guide only. It is ultimately the responsibility of treating practitioners to use their professional judgment to determine the most clinically appropriate services to provide, and then to ensure that any services billed to Medicare fully meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the legislation.*

*This sheet is current as of the Last updated date shown above, and does not account for MBS changes since that date.*



## General Practitioner (GP) Services (as of 1 July 2021)

Table 1: Standard GP services introduced on 13 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Attendance for an obvious problem	3	91790	
Attendance less than 20 minutes	23	91800	
Attendance at least 20 minutes	36	91801	
Attendance at least 40 minutes	44	91802	

Table 2: Short and long GP telephone consultations introduced on 1 July 2021

Service	Telephone items
Short consultation, less than 6 minutes	91890
Long consultation, 6 minutes or greater	91891

Table 3: COVID-19 impacted area telephone services introduced on 1 January 2022

Service	Telephone items
GP consultation, 20 minutes or longer	91894

Table 4: Health assessment for Indigenous People introduced 30 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Health assessment	715	92004	

Table 5: Chronic Disease Management items introduced 30 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Preparation of a GP management plan (GPMP)	721	92024	
Coordination of Team Care Arrangements (TCAs)	723	92025	
Contribution to a Multidisciplinary Care Plan, or to a review of a Multidisciplinary Care Plan, for a patient who is not a care recipient in a residential aged care facility	729	92026	
Contribution to a Multidisciplinary Care Plan, or to a review of a multidisciplinary care plan, for a resident in an aged care facility	731	92027	
Review of a GPMP or Coordination of a Review of TCAs	732	92028	



Table 6: Autism, pervasive developmental disorder and disability services introduced 30 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Assessment, diagnosis and preparation of a treatment and management plan for patient under 13 years with an eligible disability, at least 45 minutes.	139	92142	

Table 7: Pregnancy Support Counselling program items introduced 30 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Non-directive pregnancy support counselling, at least 20 minutes	4001	92136	92138

Table 8: Eating Disorder Management items introduced 30 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
GP without mental health skills training, preparation of an eating disorder treatment and management plan, lasting at least 20 minutes, but less than 40 minutes	90250	92146	
GP without mental health skills training, preparation of an eating disorder treatment and management plan, at least 40 minutes	90251	92147	
GP with mental health skills training, preparation of an eating disorder treatment and management plan, lasting at least 20 minutes, but less than 40 minutes	90252	92148	
GP with mental health skills training, preparation of an eating disorder treatment and management plan, at least 40 minutes	90253	92149	
Review of an eating disorder treatment and management plan	90264	92170	92176
Eating disorder psychological treatment (EDPT) service, lasting at least 30 minutes, but less than 40 minutes	90271	92182	92194
EDPT service, at least 40 minutes	90273	92184	92196

Table 9: Mental Health Services items introduced 13 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Focussed Psychological Strategies (FPS) treatment, lasting at least 30 minutes, but less than 40 minutes	2721	91818	91842
FPS treatment, at least 40 minutes	2725	91819	91843

Table 10: Mental Health Services items introduced 30 March 2020





Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
GP without mental health skills training, preparation of a GP mental health treatment plan, lasting at least 20 minutes, but less than 40 minutes	2700	92112	
GP without mental health skills training, preparation of a GP mental health treatment plan, at least 40 minutes	2701	92113	
Review of a GP mental health treatment plan or Psychiatrist Assessment and Management Plan	2712	92114	92126
Mental health treatment consultation, at least 20 minutes	2713	92115	92127
GP with mental health skills training, preparation of a GP mental health treatment plan, lasting at least 20 minutes, but less than 40 minutes	2715	92116	
GP with mental health skills training, preparation of a GP mental health treatment plan, at least 40 minutes	2717	92117	

Table 11: Urgent After Hours Attendance items introduced 30 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Urgent attendance, unsociable after hours	599	92210	

Table 12: Blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health consultation introduced 1 July 2021

Service	<i>Face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Professional attendance for the provision of services related to blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health by a general practitioner of not more than 5 minutes		92715	92731
Professional attendance for the provision of services related to blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health by a general practitioner of more than 5 minutes in duration but not more than 20 minutes		92718	92734
Professional attendance for the provision of services related to blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health by a general practitioner of more than 20 minutes in duration but not more than 40 minutes		92721	92737
Professional attendance for the provision of services related to blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health by a general practitioner lasting at least 40 minutes in duration		92724	92740



## Other Medical Practitioner (OMP) Services (as of 1 July 2021)

Table 13: Standard OMP services introduced on 13 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Attendance of not more than 5 minutes	52	91792	
Attendance of more than 5 minutes but not more than 25 minutes	53	91803	
Attendance of more than 25 minutes but not more than 45 minutes	54	91804	
Attendance of more than 45 minutes	57	91805	
Attendance of not more than 5 minutes	179	91794	
Attendance of more than 5 minutes but not more than 25 minutes. Modified Monash 2-7 area	185	91806	
Attendance of more than 25 minutes but not more than 45 minutes. Modified Monash 2-7 area	189	91807	
Attendance of more than 45 minutes. Modified Monash 2-7 area	203	91808	

Table 14: Short and long OMP telephone consultations introduced on 1 July 2021

Service	Telephone items
Short consultation, less than 6 minutes	91892
Long consultation, 6 minutes or greater	91893

Table 15: COVID-19 impacted area telephone services introduced on 1 January 2022 (Is an item required for each MM)

Service	Telephone items
OMP consultation, 20 minutes or longer	91895

Table 16: Health assessment for people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent items introduced 30 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Health assessment	228	92011	

Table 17: Chronic Disease Management Items introduced 30 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Preparation of a GP management plan (GPMP)	229	92055	
Coordination of Team Care Arrangements (TCAs)	230	92056	
Contribution to a Multidisciplinary Care Plan, or to a review of a Multidisciplinary Care Plan, for a patient	231	92057	



Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
who is not a care recipient in a residential aged care facility			
Contribution to a Multidisciplinary Care Plan, or to a review of a multidisciplinary care plan, for a resident in an aged care facility	232	92058	
Review of a GPMP or Coordination of a Review of TCAs	233	92059	

Table 18: Pregnancy Support Counselling program items introduced 30 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Non-directive pregnancy support counselling of at least 20 minutes	792	92137	92139

Table 19: Eating Disorder Management items introduced 30 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Medical Practitioner without mental health skills training, preparation of an eating disorder treatment and management plan, lasting at least 20 minutes, but less than 40 minutes	90254	92150	
Medical Practitioner without mental health skills training, preparation of an eating disorder treatment and management plan, at least 40 minutes	90255	92151	
Medical Practitioner with mental health skills training, preparation of an eating disorder treatment and management plan, lasting at least 20 minutes, but less than 40 minutes	90256	92152	
Medical Practitioner with mental health skills training, preparation of an eating disorder treatment and management plan, at least 40 minutes	90257	92153	
Review of an eating disorder treatment and management plan	90265	92171	92177
Eating disorders psychological treatment (EDPT) service, lasting at least 30 minutes, but less than 40 minutes	90275	92186	92198
EDPT service, at least 40 minutes	90277	92188	92200



Table 20: Mental Health items introduced 13 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Focussed Psychological Strategies (FPS) treatment, lasting at least 30 minutes, but less than 40 minutes	283	91820	91844
FPS treatment, at least 40 minutes	286	91821	91845

Table 21: Mental Health items introduced 30 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Medical Practitioner without mental health skills training, preparation of a GP mental health treatment plan, lasting at least 20 minutes, but less than 40 minutes	272	92118	
Medical Practitioner without mental health skills training, preparation of a GP mental health treatment plan, at least 40 minutes	276	92119	
Review of a GP mental health treatment plan or Psychiatrist Assessment and Management Plan	277	92120	92132
Medical Practitioner mental health treatment consultation, at least 20 minutes	279	92121	92133
Medical Practitioner with mental health skills training, preparation of a GP mental health treatment plan, lasting at least 20 minutes, but less than 40 minutes	281	92122	
Medical Practitioner with mental health skills training, preparation of a GP mental health treatment plan, at least 40 minutes	282	92123	

Table 22: Urgent After Hours Attendance items introduced 30 March 2020

Service	Existing Items <i>face to face</i>	Telehealth items <i>via video-conference</i>	Telephone items
Urgent attendance, unsociable after hours	600	92211	



Table 23: Blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health consultation introduced 1 July 2021

Service	Face to face	Telehealth items via video-conference	Telephone items
Professional attendance for the provision of services related to blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health by a medical practitioner (not including a general practitioner, specialist or consultant physician) of not more than 5 minutes		92716	92732
Professional attendance for the provision of services related to blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health by a medical practitioner (not including a general practitioner, specialist or consultant physician) of more than 5 minutes in duration but not more than 20 minutes		92719	92735
Professional attendance for the provision of services related to blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health by a medical practitioner (not including a general practitioner, specialist or consultant physician) of more than 20 minutes in duration but not more than 40 minutes		92722	92738
Professional attendance for the provision of services related to blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health by a medical practitioner (not including a general practitioner, specialist or consultant physician) lasting at least 40 minutes in duration		92725	92741
Professional attendance for the provision of services related to blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health by a medical practitioner (not including a general practitioner, specialist or consultant physician), in an eligible area, of not more than 5 minutes. Modified Monash 2-7 area		92717	92733
Professional attendance for the provision of services related to blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health by a medical practitioner (not including a general practitioner, specialist or consultant physician), in an eligible area, of more than 5 minutes in duration but not more than 20 minutes. Modified Monash 2-7 area		92720	92736
Professional attendance for the provision of services related to blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health by a medical practitioner (not including a general practitioner, specialist or consultant physician), in an eligible area, of more than 20 minutes in duration		92723	92739



Service	Face to face	Telehealth items via video-conference	Telephone items
but not more than 40 minutes. Modified Monash 2-7 area			
Professional attendance for the provision of services related to blood borne viruses, sexual or reproductive health by a medical practitioner (not including a general practitioner, specialist or consultant physician), in an eligible area, lasting at least 40 minutes in duration. Modified Monash 2-7 area		92726	92742

Table 24. GP Nicotine and Smoking Cessation Counselling MBS items introduced 21 July 2021

Service	Face-to-face Items	Telehealth items via video-conference	Telephone items – for when video-conferencing is not available
Professional attendance for nicotine and smoking cessation counselling, care and advice by a general practitioner at consulting rooms lasting less than 20 minutes.	93680	93690	93700
Professional attendance for nicotine and smoking cessation counselling, care and advice by a general practitioner at consulting rooms lasting at least 20 minutes.	93683	93693	93703

Table 25. OMP Nicotine and Smoking Cessation Counselling MBS items introduced 21 July 2021

Service	Face-to-face Items	Telehealth items via video-conference	Telephone items – for when video-conferencing is not available
Professional attendance for nicotine and smoking cessation counselling, care and advice by a medical practitioner (not including a general practitioner, specialist or consultant physician) at consulting rooms lasting less than 20 minutes.	93681	93691	93701
Professional attendance for nicotine and smoking cessation counselling, care and advice by a general practitioner (not including a general practitioner, specialist or consultant physician) at consulting rooms, in an eligible area, lasting less than 20 minutes. Modified Monash 2-7 area.	93682	93692	93702
Professional attendance for nicotine and smoking cessation counselling, care and advice by a medical practitioner (not including a general practitioner,	93684	93694	93704



Service	Face-to-face Items	Telehealth items via video-conference	Telephone items – for when video-conferencing is not available
specialist or consultant physician) at consulting rooms lasting at least 20 minutes.			
Professional attendance for nicotine and smoking cessation counselling, care and advice by a medical practitioner (not including a general practitioner, specialist or consultant physician) at consulting rooms, in an eligible area, lasting at least 20 minutes. Modified Monash 2-7 area.	93685	93695	93705



Table 26: MBS items to be removed from 1 January 2021: Patient–end support services provided by a medical practitioner (including a general practitioner, specialist or consultant physician) attendances

Telehealth MBS Item	MBS Group
2100 2126 2143 2195	GROUP A30, SUBROUP 1 At consulting rooms in a telehealth eligible area or at an eligible Aboriginal Medical Service
2122 2137 2147 2199	GROUP A30, SUBGROUP 1 Other than consulting rooms such as a home visit or other institution in a telehealth eligible area
2125 2138 2179 2220	GROUP A30, SUBGROUP 2 At a residential aged care facility
812 827 867 868 869 873 876 881 885 891 892	GROUP A7, SUBGROUP 12 Non-Specialist Practitioner Video Conferencing Consultation