

Additional information about new MBS item 10997 for the provision of monitoring and support to people with a chronic disease by a practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker on behalf of a GP

Introduction

New Medicare item 10997 to cover the provision of monitoring and support to people with a chronic disease by a practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker on behalf of a GP will come into effect from 1 July 2007.

The new Medicare item will be available to people with a chronic disease, who have a GP Management Plan, Team Care Arrangements or a Multidisciplinary Care Plan in place. It will assist patients who require access to ongoing care, frequently for relatively routine treatment and ongoing monitoring and support between the more structured reviews of the care plan by the GP.

The objective of this initiative is to better utilise practice nurses in chronic disease management, which will help free up GPs to spend more time with patients on complex care. It is aimed at improved access and outcomes for patients, particularly in areas of workforce shortage.

Questions and Answers:

Q1. Is there a list of chronic diseases for which ongoing monitoring and support by a practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker may be claimed?

No, anyone with a GP Management Plan, Team Care Arrangements or a Multidisciplinary Care Plan (MBS items 721, 723, 725, 727, 729, 731) is eligible for services under item 10997.

Q2. Is there a list of services which qualify as ongoing monitoring and support?

No. This item is intended to provide sufficient flexibility for the provision of services appropriate for the patient's care. It is up to the GP to decide what services the practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker should provide. The services should be within the scope of practice of the practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker undertaking the service. The monitoring and support activities provided under item 10997 should be consistent with the general direction of the patient's care plan.

Q3. What types of services can be provided as part of the new item for monitoring and support to people with a chronic disease?

Item 10997 may be used to provide:

- checks on clinical progress;
- monitoring medication compliance;
- self management advice, and;
- collection of information to support GP reviews of Care Plans.

Q4. How many services may be claimed for a patient?

A maximum of 5 services may be claimed per patient in a calendar year.

Q5. Who can claim the item?

Vocationally registered and non-vocationally registered GPs can claim this item for services provided on their behalf by a practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker. Specialists and consultant physicians cannot claim the item.

Q6. Can practice nurses or registered Aboriginal Health Workers claim the item?

No. The item is claimed by the GP. In line with existing practice nurse and registered Aboriginal Health Worker items, the service is provided by the practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker on behalf of the GP.

Q7. What is the new MBS item number for the provision of monitoring and support to people with chronic disease by a practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker on behalf of a GP?

The MBS item number for the provision of monitoring and support to people with chronic disease by a practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker on behalf of the GP is 10997.

Q8. When will the new item become operational?

Item 10997 will commence on 1 July 2007.

Q9. What is the schedule fee for item 10997?

The schedule fee for item 10997 is \$10.60. The MBS rebate is paid at 100% of the schedule fee.

Q10. Can item 10997 be claimed in conjunction with the bulk billing incentive item 10990 or 10991?

Yes, as long as the service is provided to an eligible patient that is a Commonwealth concession card holder, or person under the age of 16, and the service is bulk billed.

Q11. Can a practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker provide this service when the GP is not present?

As the service is being provided on behalf of, and under the supervision of the GP, the GP retains responsibility for the health, safety and clinical outcomes of the patient.

However, this does not mean that the GP is required to see the patient or be present with the practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker during the service, to claim item 10997. However, the GP should be able to be contacted to provide advice if necessary.

Where a consultation takes place with the patient, the GP is only eligible to claim a Medicare item for the length of time that the GP spends with the patient. The time the practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker spends with the patient to provide monitoring and support is claimed under item 10997.

Q12. Can item 10997 be claimed when a patient is also accessing Allied Health Services items (Items 10950 to 10970) as part of Team Care Arrangements, or a Multidisciplinary Care Plan?

Yes, a person who is eligible for Allied Health Services under items 10950 to 10970 can also access up to five services under item 10997 for monitoring and support by a practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker (per patient, per calendar year) provided they meet the eligibility requirements of the item (see Fact Sheet for item 10997).

Q13. Are patients with a Mental Health Plan (Item 2710) eligible to receive services under item 10997?

No, to access services under item 10997 a patient must have either a current GP Management Plan, Team Care Arrangements or a Multidisciplinary Care Plan in place (MBS items 721, 723, 725, 727, 729, 731).

Q14. How do I check how many services my patient has access under item 10997?

The patient's treating GP, practice nurse or Aboriginal Health Worker can, with the patient's consent, contact Medicare Australia on 132 011 to verify how many services have been claimed under item 10997 in the calendar year, or to verify if the patient has a current GP Management Plan, Team Care Arrangements or Multidisciplinary Care Plan in place.

Q15. A patient comes in to see the practice nurse to receive monitoring and support for a chronic condition (under item 10997) and also wants to receive a vaccination. What Medicare items can be claimed?

Item 10997 can be claimed for a practice nurse or registered Aboriginal Health Worker providing monitoring and support of the patient's chronic condition (consistent with the GP Management Plan, Team Care Arrangements or Multidisciplinary Care Plan) and in addition, item 10993 for the administration of an

immunisation by the practice nurse or item 10988 for the administration of an immunisation by a registered Aboriginal Health Worker.
Other practice nurse and registered Aboriginal Health Worker MBS items can be claimed at the same time as item 10997, if the relevant service has been provided.