

COVID-19 Bulk Billed MBS Telehealth Services

Mental Health

Fact Sheet

Version 4 / Up to date as of 20 July 2020

From 13 March 2020 to 30 September 2020 (inclusive), new MBS telehealth items are available for telehealth and phone services, as part of the COVID-19 response.

From 20 July 2020, all temporary COVID-19 phone and telehealth items for GPs and Other Medical Practitioners (OMPs) (with the exception of the after hours items and bulk billing incentives) can only be used by the patient's '**usual medical practitioner**'. This is defined as a medical practitioner (other than a specialist or consultant physician) who:

- a) has provided at least one face to face service to the patient in the past 12 months; or
- b) is located at a medical practice at which at least one service to the patient was provided, or arranged by, in the past 12 months; or
- c) is a participant in the Approved Medical Deputising Service (AMDS) program if:
 - i. the AMDS provider has a formal agreement in place with a medical practice to provide services to its patients; and
 - ii. the medical practice has provided, or arranged, at least one service to the patient in the past 12 months.

The new requirement does not apply to a person who is under the age of 12 months, a person who is experiencing homelessness, a person who is in a COVID-19 impacted area, a person receiving an urgent after-hours service (in unsociable hours), or a person who receives the service from a medical practitioner located at an Aboriginal Medical Service or an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service.

These services must be bulk billed by GPs and Other Medical Practitioners (OMPs) for Commonwealth concession card holders, children under 16 years of age, and patients who are more vulnerable to COVID-19.

This includes a patient who:

- is required to self-isolate or self-quarantine in accordance with guidance issued by the

Australian Health Protection Principal Committee in relation to COVID-19; or

- is at least 70 years old; or
- if the person identifies as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent—is at least 50 years old; or
- is pregnant; or
- is the parent of a child aged under 12 months; or
- is being treated for a chronic health condition; or
- is immune compromised; or
- meets the current national triage protocol criteria for suspected COVID-19 infection.

What does this mean for providers?

Providers will benefit from the greater flexibility in how they deliver services to their patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Providers do not need to be in their regular practice to provide telehealth services. Providers who offer their services from home isolation or quarantine should use their provider number for their primary location and must provide safe services in accordance with normal professional standards.

Telehealth or phone services should only be provided where it is safe and clinically appropriate to do so. Practitioners must ensure they are appropriately credentialed by Medicare to provide the below mental health services.

The new telehealth services must be bulk billed by GPs and OMPs for vulnerable patients, concession card holders and children under 16 years at the time the service is being provided, meaning MBS rebates are paid to the provider. Rebates will be paid at 85% of the new item fee amount, which have been increased to result in the same payment as an equivalent GP face to face service. The Department of Health has not been able to amend the regulations, which set out 100% rebates, due to the urgency of these arrangements.

Where can I find more information?

- **COVID-19 National Health Plan resources** for the general public, health professionals

Source: www.mbsonline.gov.au (Mar 2020) – refer to source for full item details including eligibility & restrictions.

*75% and/or 85%/100% rebate also applies to some of these item numbers

** Refer to MBS(Medicare Benefit Schedule) for full patient eligibility guidelines.

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and industry are available from the Australian Government Department of Health website www.health.gov.au/.

- **The full item descriptor(s)** and information on other changes to the MBS can be found on the MBS Online website at 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.
- Subscribe to 'News for Health Professionals' on the Services Australia website and you will receive regular news highlights.

GP Mental Health Item Numbers

Item	COVID-19 Video conference items Must be bulk billed	Fee*
92112	GP without mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, 20 to 40 minutes	\$85.70
92113	GP without mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, more than 40 minutes	\$126.15
92114	GP to review a mental health plan	\$85.70
92115	GP mental health consult, more than 20 minutes	\$85.70
92116	GP with mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, 20 to 40 minutes	\$108.80
92117	GP with mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, more than 40 minutes	\$160.25
91818	Focussed psychological strategies for assessed mental disorders, 30-40 minutes	\$110.85
91819	Focussed psychological strategies for assessed mental disorders, more than 40 minutes	\$158.60
Item	COVID-19 Telephone items Must be bulk billed	Fee*
92124	GP without mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, 20 to 40 minutes	\$85.70
92125	GP without mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, more than 40 minutes	\$126.15
92126	GP to review a mental health plan	\$85.70
92127	GP mental health consult, more than 20 minutes	\$85.70
92128	GP with mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, 20 to 40 minutes	\$108.80
92129	GP with mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, more than 40 minutes	\$160.25
91842	Focussed psychological strategies for assessed mental disorders, 30-40 minutes	\$110.85
91843	Focussed psychological strategies for assessed mental disorders, more than 40 minutes	\$158.60

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Other Medical Practitioner Mental Health Item Numbers

Item	COVID-19 Video conference items Must be bulk billed	Fee*
92118	OMP without mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, 20 to 40 minutes	\$68.55
92119	OMP without mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, more than 40 minutes	\$100.90
92120	OMP to review a mental health plan	\$68.55
92121	OMP mental health consult, more than 20 minutes	\$68.55
92122	OMP with mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, 20 to 40 minutes	\$87.05
92123	OMP with mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, more than 40 minutes	\$128.20
91820	Focussed psychological strategies for assessed mental disorders, 30-40 minutes	\$88.70
91821	Focussed psychological strategies for assessed mental disorders, more than 40 minutes	\$126.90
Item	COVID-19 Telephone items Must be bulk billed	Fee*
92130	GP without mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, 20 to 40 minutes	\$68.55
92131	GP without mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, more than 40 minutes	\$100.90
92132	GP to review a mental health plan	\$68.55
92133	GP mental health consult, more than 20 minutes	\$68.55
92134	GP with mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, 20 to 40 minutes	\$87.05
92135	GP with mental health training, prepare a mental health plan, more than 40 minutes	\$128.20
91844	Focussed psychological strategies for assessed mental disorders, 30-40 minutes	\$88.70
91845	Focussed psychological strategies for assessed mental disorders, more than 40 minutes	\$126.90

Allied Health Focussed Psychological Strategies Item Numbers

These items are applicable if the patient is referred under a GP Mental Health Treatment Plan, or by a specialist or consultant physician in psychiatry or paediatrics. The maximum of 10 sessions in a calendar year applies including face-to-face sessions utilised since 1 January 2020..

Item	COVID-19 Video conference items	Fee*
Clinical Psychologists		
91166	Attendance lasting 30 – 50 minutes	\$101.35
91167	Attendance lasting more than 50 minutes	\$148.80
Psychologists		
91169	Attendance lasting 30 – 50 minutes	\$71.80
91170	Attendance lasting more than 50 minutes	\$101.35
Occupational Therapists		
91172	Attendance lasting 30 – 50 minutes	\$63.25
91173	Attendance lasting more than 50 minutes	\$89.35
Social Workers		
91175	Attendance lasting 30 – 50 minutes	\$63.25
91176	Attendance lasting more than 50 minutes	\$89.35
Item	COVID-19 Telephone items	Fee*
Clinical Psychologist		
91181	Attendance lasting 30 – 50 minutes	\$101.35
91182	Attendance lasting more than 50 minutes	\$148.80
Psychologists		
91183	Attendance lasting 30 – 50 minutes	\$71.80
91184	Attendance lasting more than 50 minutes	\$101.35
Occupational Therapist		
91185	Attendance lasting 30 – 50 minutes	\$63.25
91186	Attendance lasting more than 50 minutes	\$89.35
Social Worker		
91187	Attendance lasting 30 – 50 minutes	\$63.25
91188	Attendance lasting more than 50 minutes	\$89.35

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Consultant Psychiatrist

Item	COVID-19 Video conference items	Fee*
92455	Group psychotherapy of not less than 1 hour (2-9 unrelated patients or a family group of more than 3 patients)	\$50.85
92456	Group psychotherapy of not less than 1 hour (family group of 3 patients)	\$67.50
92457	Group psychotherapy of not less than 1 hour (family group of 2 patients)	\$99.80
Item	COVID-19 Telephone items	Fee*
92495	Group psychotherapy of not less than 1 hour (2-9 unrelated patients or a family group of more than 3 patients)	\$50.85
92496	Group psychotherapy of not less than 1 hour (family group of 3 patients)	\$67.50
92497	Group psychotherapy of not less than 1 hour (family group of 2 patients)	\$99.80

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