Practice Incentives Program (PIP)
eHealth Incentive

Digital health allows patient health information to be easily shared between all the healthcare providers involved in the care, including GPs, hospitals, imaging centres, specialists and allied health professionals.

The Practice Incentives Program (PIP) eHealth Incentive aims to encourage practices to keep up to date with digital health and adopt new technology as it becomes available.

Common terms

Standardised Whole Patient Equivalent (SWPE)

SWPE is used to measure practice size and includes a weighting factor for the age and gender of patients. The average full-time general practitioner has a SWPE value of around 1000 SWPEs each year.

Whole Patient Equivalent (WPE)

WPE is based on general practitioner and other non-referred Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) item numbers and uses the value of the MBS fee, rather than the number of consultations per patient. The total care for each patient equals one WPE.

Payments and eligibility requirements

Eligible practices can receive a maximum payment of $12,500 per quarter, based on $6.50 per Standardised Whole Patient Equivalent (SWPE) per year.

To be eligible for the PIP eHealth Incentive, general practices must:
- participate in the PIP
- meet the following five requirements for the entire quarter prior to the payment month.

Requirement 1

Integrating healthcare identifiers into electronic practice records

To meet this requirement, practices must:
- apply to Services Australia to obtain a Healthcare Provider Identifier - Organisation (HPI-O) for the practice and store the HPI-O in a compliant software system

- ensure that each general practitioner within the practice has their Healthcare Provider Identifier - Individual (HPI-I) stored in a compliant clinical software system
- use a compliant clinical software system to access, retrieve and store verified Individual Healthcare Identifiers (IHI) for presenting patients.

Requirement 2

Secure messaging capability

Practices must have a standards-compliant secure messaging capability to electronically transmit and receive clinical messages to and from other healthcare providers, use it where feasible and have a written policy in place to encourage its use.

To meet this requirement, practices must have applied for a National Authentication Service for Health (NASH) Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) Certificate for Healthcare Provider Organisations or must apply for one within two weeks of receiving an HPI-O.

Requirement 3
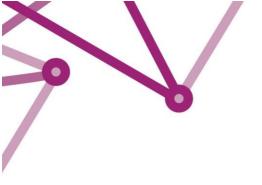
Data records and clinical coding

Practices must ensure that where clinically relevant, they are working towards recording the majority of diagnoses for active patients electronically, using a medical vocabulary that can be mapped against a nationally recognised disease classification or terminology system. Practices must provide a written policy to this effect to all GPs within the practice.

Requirement 4

Electronic transfer of prescriptions (eTP)

Practices must ensure that the majority of their prescriptions are sent electronically to a Prescription Exchange Service (PES).

In the electronic transfer of prescriptions process, a prescription is generated by the health practitioner and printed from the local clinical system with a barcode.

The electronic transfer of the prescription occurs at this point by sending a copy of the information on the prescription to a repository called the Prescription Exchange Service (PES).

When the patient presents the printed prescription to the pharmacist, the barcode is scanned and the information is sent directly from the PES to the pharmacy dispensing system without the pharmacist having to re-enter the information, which reduces the risk of transcription errors.

There are currently two electronic transfer of prescriptions (eTP) services available – eRx Script Exchange and MediSecure.

Requirement 5

My Health Record system

To meet this requirement, practices must:
- apply to participate in the My Health Record system upon obtaining an HPI-O
- use a compliant software for accessing the My Health Record system
- upload shared health summaries and event summaries for a minimum of 0.5 per cent of the practice's SWPE per PIP payment quarter.

Applying for the PIP eHealth Incentive

Practices can apply for the PIP eHealth Incentive online through HPOS using their PKI certificate or Provider Digital Access (PRODA) account details.

Further information

To find out more about the Practice Incentives Program (PIP) eHealth Incentive, visit the Services Australia website, call 1800 222 032 or email pip@servicesaustralia.gov.au