

MBS

Health Assessments

What is a health assessment?

A health assessment is the assessment of a patient's health, physical, psychological and social function. It involves the consideration of whether preventative health care and education should be offered to the patient.

Under the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) a medical practitioner may access a range of MBS health assessment item numbers to provide a health assessment to nominated target groups.

The health assessment item number utilized will depend on the time taken to complete the health assessment service. This is determined by the complexity of the patient's presentation, and the specific requirements for each target group eligible for health assessments.

Eligibility

Before a health assessment is commenced, the patient (and/or guardian, carer or representative) must be given an explanation of the health assessment process and its likely benefits.

The patient must be asked to consent to the health assessment being performed. In cases where the patient is not capable of giving consent, consent must be given by their guardian, carer or representative. This consent must be noted in the patient's records.

Health assessments are not available to people who are in-patients of a hospital or residential aged care facility (with the exception of a comprehensive medical assessment for a permanent resident of a residential aged care facility).

Item numbers

| Item Number | Description of health assessment |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| 701 | Brief (<30 minutes) |
| 703 | Standard (30 to 45 minutes) |
| 705 | Long (45 to 60 minutes) |
| 707 | Prolonged (>60 minutes) |

Target groups

| Target Group [^] | Frequency of service |
|--|------------------------|
| A type 2 diabetes risk evaluation for people aged 40 – 49 years with a high risk of developing type 2 diabetes | Once every three years |
| A health assessment for people aged 45 – 49 years at risk of developing chronic disease | Once only |
| A health assessment for people aged 75 years and older | Provided annually |
| A comprehensive medical assessment for permanent residents of residential aged care facilities | Provided annually |
| A health assessment for people with an intellectual disability | Provided annually |
| A health assessment for refugees and other humanitarian entrants | Once only |
| A health assessment for former members of the Australian Defence Force | Once only |

[^]Please refer to [MBS Health Assessment FactSheet](#) and [MBS Note AN.0.36](#) to confirm current information

What is included in a health assessment?

A health assessment must include the following elements:

- Information collection, including a patient history, undertaking/arranging examinations and investigations as required;
- Making an overall assessment of the patient;
- Recommending appropriate interventions;
- Providing advice and information.
- keeping a record of the health assessment and offering the patient a written report with recommendations, and
- offering the patient's carer (if appropriate and with the patient's consent) a copy of the report or relevant extracts.

Who can offer a health assessment under the MBS?

The MBS health assessment items may only be claimed by a medical practitioner (including a general practitioner but not including a specialist or consultant physician).

A health assessment should generally be undertaken by the patient's 'usual doctor'. For the purpose of the health assessment items, 'usual doctor' means the medical practitioner, or a medical practitioner working in the medical practice, which has provided the majority of primary health care to the patient over the previous twelve months and/or will be providing the majority of care to the patient over the next twelve months.

A health assessment should not take the form of a health screening service. MBS item numbers 701, 703, 705 and 707 must be provided by a medical practitioner personally attending a patient. Suitably qualified health professionals, such as practice nurse, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners or Aboriginal health workers, employed and/or otherwise engaged by a general practitioner or health service, may assist medical practitioners in performing health assessments.

Such assistance must be provided in accordance with accepted medical practice and under the supervision of the medical practitioner. This may include activities associated with information

collection; and providing patients with information about recommended interventions at the direction of the medical practitioner.

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.

Conducting a health assessment

Medical practitioners should not conduct a separate consultation for another health-related issue in conjunction with a health assessment unless it is clinically necessary (ie if the patient has an acute problem that needs to be managed separately from the assessment). The exception is a comprehensive medical assessment, where the health assessment item and the relevant item for the other consultation may both be claimed.

MBS item numbers 10990 or 10991 (bulk billing incentives) can be claimed in conjunction with any health assessment, provided the conditions of MBS items numbers 10990 or 10991 are satisfied.

Further Information

Further information can be seen on the Department of Health [Medicare Health Assessments Resource Kit](#) page. This includes fact sheets, proformas and checklists to use for health assessments.