



Australian Government

Department of Health and Ageing

Medicare Benefits Schedule - New Allied Health Items for People of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Descent

I am writing to inform you that some new allied health items will be added to the Medicare Benefits Schedule on 1 November 2008. These new items will allow people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who have had a health assessment to receive a Medicare benefit for follow-up allied health services. To access these items patients must be referred to an eligible allied health provider by their GP.

Medicare benefits for a maximum of five services are available each calendar year. Eligible patients can receive these services in addition to the five allied health services available each calendar year under items 10950-10970 (for patients who have a chronic medical condition and complex care needs).

The item descriptors and explanatory notes for items 81300 - 81360 are attached for your information. These details will be available in Category 8 of the Medicare Benefits Schedule Book for 1 November 2008. This year the Medicare Benefits Schedule will not be a printed book. Instead, a CD will be sent to providers in late October. The CD will include the Medicare Benefits Schedule – Allied Health Services Book for 1 November 2008. These documents, as well as information regarding the Medicare Benefits Schedule, can be accessed through the Department's website at www.health.gov.au/mbsonline.

In addition, the Department has produced some materials to support the introduction of the new items:

- Fact Sheet – Follow-up allied health services for people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent
- Referral form for follow-up allied health services under Medicare for people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent

A copy of each document is attached, and is also available on the Department's website at www.health.gov.au/epc. The fact sheet sets out information to help allied health professionals and GPs to use these items. I hope that your members will find it useful.

As is the case for the existing individual allied health items (10950 to 10970), a specific referral form must be used by GPs when referring patients to an eligible allied health professional.

I would be grateful for your assistance in disseminating information about these new items to your members.

If you have any questions in relation to this matter, please contact Rhonda Stilling on (02) 6289 8067 or by email rhonda.stilling@health.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

[Authorised for transmission]

Peter Woodley
Assistant Secretary
Medicare Financing and Analysis Branch

29 October 2008

- Encl: - Item Descriptors and Explanatory notes
- Fact Sheet – Follow-up allied health services for people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent
 - Referral form for follow-up allied health services under Medicare for people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent