

Who is eligible?

You may be able to claim Medicare rebates for allied health services if you have a chronic medical condition that is being managed by your GP under an Enhanced Primary Care (EPC) plan.

Chronic medical conditions

A chronic medical condition is one that has been (or is likely to be) present for six months or longer. It includes conditions such as asthma, cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, musculoskeletal conditions and stroke.

EPC plan

Care plans can help you and your GP manage your chronic medical condition by identifying your needs and planning what should be done. An EPC plan involves your GP preparing a GP Management Plan and Team Care Arrangements.

If you have a chronic medical condition, a GP Management Plan provides an organised approach to your care. It is a plan of action that you have agreed with your GP.

If you have complex care needs, Team Care Arrangements help coordinate your care. Your GP will collaborate with at least two other care providers involved in your treatment.

Patients in aged care facilities

Residents of aged care facilities may also be eligible for Medicare rebates for allied health services if their GP has contributed to a multidisciplinary care plan prepared by the facility.

Individual allied health services

Once you have an EPC plan, you can be referred for up to five allied health services each calendar year. It is important to understand that your GP will decide whether you should be referred for these services.

The five services can be provided by a single allied health professional or shared across different professionals.

You can request that the GP refer you to an allied health professional you already know, or your GP can recommend one.

Allied health professionals need to meet specific eligibility criteria and be registered with Medicare Australia.

Medicare rebate

The Medicare rebate for each service is \$48.95*.

*Medicare rebates are indexed on 1 November each year.

Eligible allied health professionals

- Aboriginal health workers
- audiologists
- chiropractors
- diabetes educators
- dietitians
- exercise physiologists
- mental health workers
- occupational therapists
- osteopaths
- physiotherapists
- podiatrists
- psychologists
- speech pathologists

Other allied health services available under Medicare

Medicare benefits are also available for a range of other allied health services for certain patients. You may be eligible if you:

- are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- have type 2 diabetes;
- have an assessed mental disorder;
- are a child with autism or any other pervasive developmental disorder;
- are a woman who is concerned about either a current pregnancy, or one that occurred in the previous 12 months.



In summary:

- Maximum of five (5) services per patient each calendar year
- Medicare rebate of \$48.95* per service, with out-of-pocket costs counting towards the extended Medicare safety net
- Patient must have an Enhanced Primary Care (EPC) plan prepared by their GP
- Your GP will decide whether you would benefit from these services and, if so, will refer you for appropriate allied health services
- Allied health professionals must be registered with Medicare Australia

Private health insurance

If you have private health insurance, you will need to decide if you wish to use Medicare or your private health insurance to pay for these services. You cannot use private health insurance ancillary cover to 'top up' your Medicare rebate.

Claiming

Allied health professionals, like doctors, are free to set the level of their fees. If your allied health provider bulk bills, there will be no charge for these services. If not, you will be charged a fee and you can claim the rebate from Medicare.

Out-of-pocket expenses for these services count towards the extended Medicare safety net.

If you are unsure, or lose track of how many allied health services you have claimed in a calendar year, you can check with Medicare Australia on 132 011.

More information

For more information on Medicare rebates for allied health services talk to your GP or go to the Department of Health and Ageing web site at www.health.gov.au and follow the A-Z links to the program you are interested in.

Any questions? Ask your doctor or practice nurse

MEDICARE REBATES FOR ALLIED HEALTH SERVICES

- PATIENTS WITH A
CHRONIC MEDICAL
CONDITION AND
COMPLEX CARE NEEDS

Patient Information

January 2009