






Navigating Medicare

Medicare is Australia's universal health scheme which guarantees all citizens (and some overseas visitors) access to a wide range of health services at little or no cost. The Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) is a listing of Medicare services subsidised by the Australian Government. Currently, the MBS contains more than 5700 items. It is essential that GP supervisors orientate their GP registrars to appropriate use of the MBS, especially commonly used item numbers and pitfalls.

<p>TEACHING AND LEARNING AREAS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach to billing in the practice • Templates for GPMPs, TCAs, MHCPs, HAs etc. • Medicare criteria for common consultation items – see MBS Online • Medicare rules and practice approach for Chronic Disease Management items • Medicare rules for GP Mental Health Treatment items • Medicare guide to Aftercare or Post-operative Treatment • Medicare guide and practice approach to Health Assessments • Medicare information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people • Practice approach to recall and review of care plans 				
<p>PRE- SESSION ACTIVITIES</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Medicare for Health Professionals online learning program (basic introduction) – Introduction to the Medicare Benefits Schedule 				
<p>TEACHING TIPS AND TRAPS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusions for GPMPs e.g. obesity, hypertension, substance abuse • Medicare rules around chronic disease management items e.g. only one specialist can be counted towards the minimum of two multidisciplinary team members • Recommended frequency and minimum claiming times for GPMPs/TCAs, MHCPs etc. • Registrars may 'undersell' themselves and fail to bill appropriately - it is important to value the service provided despite relative inexperience • All providers are responsible for the accuracy of their billing, and daily billing tallies should be routinely checked 				
<p>RESOURCES</p> 	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="336 1727 432 1892">Read</td> <td data-bbox="432 1727 1493 1892"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2020 Medicare Benefits Schedule • RACGP Medicare Benefits Schedule fee summary - quick and easy reference to commonly used item numbers • MBS Education Guides </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="336 1892 432 1951">Watch</td> <td data-bbox="432 1892 1493 1951"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicare for Health Professionals online learning program – Primary Care Items </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2020 Medicare Benefits Schedule • RACGP Medicare Benefits Schedule fee summary - quick and easy reference to commonly used item numbers • MBS Education Guides 	Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicare for Health Professionals online learning program – Primary Care Items
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<p>FOLLOW UP & EXTENSION ACTIVITIES</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jointly undertake the Best-practice examples of chronic disease management in Australia • Registrar to discuss scenarios and questions on following page with supervisor 				

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MBS in practice

Scenario 1

Jan is a 55-year-old teacher with well controlled type 2 diabetes. She has recently returned home after a ski trip to Japan and tells you that she twisted her knee on the final day of skiing. She requests referral to the local physio for treatment as part of her existing care plan. How should this be billed?

Scenario 2

Maurice, a 33-year-old bus driver, presents to you with low mood. Three weeks ago his wife revealed that she had been having an affair and moved out. He feels 'devastated' and has missed several days work. You consider a MHCP and referral to a psychologist. How should this be billed?

Scenario 3

You are asked to see Harold, aged 81, who is in with the practice nurse for removal of sutures. Ten days previously, he had excision of a large BCC from his scalp by a plastic surgeon. How should this be billed?

True/False Questions

QUESTION 1.	The time taken to record clinical notes after the consultation has ended can be included when determining the total length of the consultation	True	False
QUESTION 2.	You can bill Medicare for writing a specialist referral even if you do not see the patient for a consultation	True	False
QUESTION 3.	You can bill Medicare for age or health-related medical examinations to obtain or renew a licence to drive a private motor vehicle	True	False
QUESTION 4.	You can bill Medicare for performing medical examinations for commercial driving licenses and pilot licences	True	False
QUESTION 5.	The time taken to travel to a patient's home is included when determining the length of the home visit consultation	True	False
QUESTION 6.	You can bill Medicare for a medical examination for Centrelink benefits	True	False
QUESTION 7.	You can bill Medicare for professional services rendered to your partner or your children	True	False
QUESTION 8.	You can bill Medicare for professional services rendered to your practice staff	True	False

Answers

1F, 2F, 3T, 4F, 5F, 6T, 7F, 8T