

## FACT SHEET

# Medicare Benefits Schedule 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 preventive health care and education should be offered to the patient.

Under the Medicare Benefits Schedule 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 utilised 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 that have been established for each target group eligible for health assessments.

### Eligibility

Before a health assessment is commenced, the patient (and/or his or her parent(s), carer or representative, as appropriate) 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 his or her parent(s), carer or representative. Consent to the health assessment must be noted in the patient's records.

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

### Item numbers

Item number	Description of service
701	<b>Health assessment – Brief</b> Fee: \$57.10 Benefit: 100% = \$57.10
703	<b>Health assessment – Standard</b> Fee: \$132.70 Benefit: 100% = \$132.70
705	<b>Health assessment – Long</b> Fee: \$183.05 Benefit: 100% = \$183.05
707	<b>Health assessment – Prolonged</b> Fee: \$258.65 Benefit: 100% = \$258.65

## Target groups

MBS items 701, 703, 705 and 707 may be used to undertake a health assessment for the following target groups:

Target group	Frequency of service
A Healthy Kids Check for children aged at least 3 years and less than 5 years of age, who have received or who are receiving their 4 year old immunisation	Once only to an eligible patient
A type 2 diabetes risk evaluation for people aged 40-49 years (inclusive) with a high risk of developing type 2 diabetes as determined by the Australian Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment Tool	Once every three years to an eligible patient
A health assessment for people aged 45-49 years (inclusive) who are at risk of developing chronic disease	Once only to an eligible patient
A health assessment for people aged 75 years and older	Provided annually to an eligible patient
A comprehensive medical assessment for permanent residents of residential aged care facilities	Provided annually to an eligible patient
A health assessment for people with an intellectual disability	Provided annually to an eligible patient
A health assessment for refugees and other humanitarian entrants	Once only to an eligible patient

## What is included in a health assessment?

A health assessment must include the following elements:

- information collection, including taking a patient history and undertaking or arranging examinations and investigations as required;
- making an overall assessment of the patient;
- recommending appropriate interventions;
- providing advice and information to the patient;
- keeping a record of the health assessment, and offering the patient a written report about the health assessment, with recommendations about matters covered by the health assessment; and
- offering the patient's carer (if any, and if the medical practitioner considers it appropriate and the patient agrees) a copy of the report or extracts of the report relevant to the carer.

## Who can offer a health assessment under the MBS?

The health assessment MBS item numbers 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 items 701, 703, 705 and 707 must be provided by a medical practitioner personally attending a patient. Suitably qualified health professionals, such as practice nurses or Aboriginal health workers, employed and/or otherwise engaged by a general practice 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. the patient has an acute problem that needs to be managed separately from the assessment).

The only exceptions are:

- a health assessment provided as a Healthy Kids Check, where a consultation associated with the four year old immunisation can be conducted on the same occasion; and
- the comprehensive medical assessment, where, if this health assessment is undertaken during the course of a consultation for another purpose, the health assessment item and the relevant item for the other consultation may both be claimed

Items 701, 703, 705 and 707 do not apply for services that are provided by any other Commonwealth or State funded service. However, where an exemption under subsection 19(2) of the Health Insurance Act 1973 has been granted to an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service or State/Territory Government health clinic, items 701, 703, 705 and 707 can be claimed for services provided by a medical practitioner salaried by or contracted to the Service of health clinic. All other requirements of the items must be met.

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

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