

Practice Incentives Program – COVID-19 in-reach vaccination payment guidelines

As at January 2023

The Practice Incentives Program (PIP) COVID-19 In-reach Vaccination Payment is a time-limited payment to support general practices that undertake in-reach COVID-19 vaccination services for residential aged care and disability workers in their place of work and residents in aged care or disability support settings.

This payment is only available for Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) COVID-19 vaccine suitability assessment services (for primary vaccine course and subsequent booster vaccine doses) that are administered via an **in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinic** between 29 April 2021 and 31 January 2023.

The COVID-19 In-reach Vaccination Payment initially only covered vaccinations for residential aged care and disability workers in their place of work. This was expanded on 1 November 2021 to also support vaccinations to residents via an in-reach vaccination clinic.

Eligibility

To be eligible to receive the Payment, a general practice must:

- be approved for the Practice Incentives Program (PIP);
- be accredited as a general practice against the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) *Standards for general practices*;
- meet the definition of an open practice for the entire payment period;
- have been authorised by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care to administer COVID-19 vaccines;
- have completed COVID-19 vaccination training for the safe management and administration of COVID-19 vaccines;
- have provided an in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinic coordinated by a residential aged care or disability support residential facility, or Primary Health Network (PHN); and
- have provided a minimum of 50 cumulative COVID-19 vaccine assessment services to residential aged care or disability support workers as part of an in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinic.

Payments

The COVID-19 In-reach Vaccination Payment is available for:

1. in-reach COVID-19 vaccination services provided to aged care and disability support workers from 29 April 2021 until 31 January 2023.
2. in-reach COVID-19 vaccination services provided to aged care and disability residents from 1 November 2021 until 31 January 2023.

A minimum of 50 cumulative COVID-19 vaccine assessment services must be provided for residential aged care or disability support workers as part of an **in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinic in a residential aged care or disability support setting** between 29 April 2021 and 31 January 2023. Incentives for residents can only be accessed from 1 November 2021, and after the threshold for workers is reached.

COVID-19 vaccine assessment services can be for the primary vaccine course or subsequent booster vaccine dose.

PIP COVID-19 In-reach Vaccination Payments are only payable where vaccination services are provided through an in-reach vaccination clinic. They are not payable where vaccination services are provided to residential aged care or disability support workers at the general practice location.

COVID-19 In-reach Vaccination Payments are provided in addition to the per patient fees payable in line with existing MBS funding arrangements and where applicable, PIP COVID-19 Vaccine General Practice Incentive payments.

A Rural Loading does not apply to PIP COVID-19 In-reach Vaccination Payments.

PIP COVID-19 In-reach Vaccination Payments cannot be made in relation to:

- vaccination services provided by a general practice that is not approved for the PIP.
- where other funding arrangements are in place for this incentive (for example to Commonwealth Vaccination Clinics or Community Pharmacies).

1. Payments for services to workers 29 April 2021 to 31 January 2023

Eligible practices will receive:

- a \$1,000 payment once a minimum threshold of 50 COVID-19 vaccine assessment services have been provided for residential aged care or disability support workers (cumulative) at an in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinic, and
- \$20 for every COVID-19 vaccine assessment service for a residential aged care or disability support worker provided at an in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinic thereafter.

Note: where the minimum threshold for eligible services has not been met in one reference period, services will accumulate and roll-over into the next reference period. For example, where the minimum threshold of 50 workers was not met by November 2021, eligible services will accumulate and roll-over into the next reference period from 1 November 2021 to 30 June 2022. If the minimum threshold is not met prior to 30 June 2022, eligible services will roll-over into the period from 1 July 2022 to 31 January 2023.

2. Payments for services to residents 1 November 2021 to 31 January 2023

From 1 November 2021, vaccine assessment services provided to residents are payable and can accumulate once the minimum threshold for residential aged care and disability support workers is met.

Eligible practices will receive:

- \$20 for every COVID-19 vaccine assessment service provided to a resident in a residential aged care or disability support setting provided at an in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinic.

Requirements

To be eligible to receive the COVID-19 In-reach Vaccination Payment, general practices **must**:

- report the relevant details for each in-reach vaccination clinic through the COVID-19 Vaccine Administrative System (CVAS), including the date and number of workers and residents vaccinated per clinic; and
- provide sufficient evidence of in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinics to support the claim. PHNs will assist the verification process.

Table 1: Reference periods with corresponding data submission date and payment month

Vaccination Reference Period	Data submission finalised in CVAS by	Payment month
29 April 2021 to 31 October 2021	7 November 2021*	November 2021
1 November 2021 to 30 June 2022	COB 15 July 2022	August 2022
1 July 2022 to 31 January 2023	COB 10 February. 2023	February 2023

*no further claims for this period will be accepted.

Services provided after 31 January 2023 will not be eligible for the COVID-19 In-reach Vaccination Payment. Claims submitted after 10 February 2023 may not be processed.

Participating general practices will need to ensure accurate information on the number of doses administered at in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinic is recorded in CVAS, and retain all relevant records relating to the assessment of suitability for each patient, including (as relevant) administration of vaccines.

Payments will be made based on the number of MBS COVID-19 vaccine assessment services provided, after the minimum threshold of 50 workers is met. If the threshold is not reached prior to the end of the reporting period, the services delivered to workers in this period can be counted in subsequent reference periods to meet the eligibility requirements for a payment.

The Department of Health and Aged Care has a range of methods to identify, verify and investigate inaccurate claiming. This includes verification with facilities and PHNs.

Reports must be submitted in CVAS by close of business on the respective data submission dates to be considered in the payment month.

Applying

You do not have to apply for the COVID-19 In-reach Vaccination Payment if your practice is already participating in the PIP and participating as a primary care COVID-19 vaccination provider to conduct in-reach COVID-19 vaccination clinics.

If your practice is not participating in the PIP, you can apply:

- online through Health Professional Online Services (HPOS) at servicesaustralia.gov.au/hpos using your Provider Digital Access (PRODA) account.
 - Read more about PRODA including how to create an account at servicesaustralia.gov.au/proda.
- By faxing a completed Practice Incentives application form (IP001) to **1300 587 696**.
 - Go to servicesaustralia.gov.au/hpforms to download the form.

Obligations

Your practice must:

- keep documentary evidence of the assessment services and vaccine course provided to patients;
- give information to the Department of Health and Aged Care and Services Australia for the ongoing audit process to verify that the practice has met eligibility requirements;
- make sure any information given to the Department of Health and Aged Care and Services Australia is correct; and
- tell Services Australia about changes to practice arrangements within 7 days of the change.

Rights of review

The PIP has a review of decision process for program decisions.

To ask for a review of a decision, the authorised contact person or owner/s of the practice must complete the [Practice Incentives Review of decision form \(IP027\)](#). The completed form must be submitted within 28 days of the decision.

The Australian Government will review the decision and let you know the outcome in writing.

Audits

The Department of Health and Aged Care conducts audits of PIP practices each year to ensure practices are meeting the requirements outlined in these Guidelines. This may include a review of practice documentation. If requested, practices must provide evidence to support their eligibility for payments.

For the purpose of the audits, practices must retain practice documentation for 6 years. Payments may be recovered if a practice is unable to provide evidence to verify that it meets the eligibility requirements or substantiate claims.

For more information

Online: servicesaustralia.gov.au/practice-incentives-program

Email: pip@servicesaustralia.gov.au

Call: 1800 222 032 (call charges may apply).

Disclaimer

These Guidelines are for information purposes and provide the basis upon which PIP payments are made. While it is intended that the Australian Government will make payments as set out in these Guidelines, the making of payments is at its sole discretion. The Australian Government may alter arrangements for the PIP at any time and without notice. The Australian Government does not accept any legal liability or responsibility for any injury, loss or damage incurred by the use of, reliance on, or interpretation of the information provided in these Guidelines.