



MBS Review Advisory Committee

Communique – January 2023

The Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) Review Advisory Committee (MRAC) supports the MBS Continuous Review to ensure the MBS is contemporary, sustainable, evidence based, and supports universal access to high value care for all Australians.

The MRAC meets quarterly, and most recently met on the land of the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people on 6 December 2022.

Current MRAC membership

The MRAC is comprised of practising clinicians, academics, health system experts and consumers. Its Terms of Reference are available on the Department of Health and Aged Care [MRAC webpage](#).

Member	Specialty
Conjoint Professor Anne Duggan (Chair)	Policy and Clinical Advisor/Gastroenterology
Ms Jo Watson (Deputy Chair)	Consumer Representative
Dr Jason Agostino	Indigenous Health
Dr Matt Andrews	Radiology
Professor John Atherton	Cardiology
Professor Wendy Brown	General Surgeon – Upper Gastrointestinal and Bariatric Surgery
Professor Adam Elshaug	Health Services/Systems Research
Ms Margaret Foulds	Psychology
Associate Professor Sally Green	Health Services/Systems Research
Dr Chris Helms	Nurse Practitioner
Professor Harriet Hiscock	Paediatrics
Professor Anthony Lawler	Health Services Administration/Emergency Medicine

Member	Specialty
Ms Alison Marcus	Consumer Representative
Associate Professor Elizabeth Marles	General Practice/Indigenous Health
Dr Sue Masel	Rural General Practice
Professor Christobel Saunders	General Surgeon – Breast Cancer and Reconstructive Surgery
Associate Professor Ken Sikaris	Pathology
Ms Robyn Stephen	Paediatric Speech Pathology
Associate Professor Angus Turner	Ophthalmology/Rural and Remote Medicine
Professor Christopher Vertullo	Orthopaedic Surgery
Department of Health and Aged Care Adviser	
Associate Professor Andrew Singer	Principal Medical Adviser

MRAC Working Groups

MRAC working groups may be established to conduct reviews and will typically consist of a subset of MRAC members and external subject matter experts as required.

Findings and recommendations from all working groups are subject to extensive consultation processes prior to MRAC consideration, finalisation and submission to Government.

MRAC meeting 5 – 6 December 2022

Consideration of final reports from the first 2 MRAC reviews

Genetic Counselling Working Group

The Genetic Counselling Working Group (GCWG) was established to consider and advise the MRAC on an application from the Human Genetics Society of Australasia (HGSA) for the introduction of MBS items for genetic counselling services and genetic testing rights for HGSA registered genetic counsellors.

Following extensive consultation processes the working group presented its final report and recommendation to the MRAC.

The MRAC endorsed the GCWG Final Report, and the Department of Health and Aged Care will now present it to Government for consideration. It will also be published in early 2023 on the MRAC webpage.

Surgical Assistant Working Group

The Surgical Assistant Working Group (SAWG) was established to consider surgical assistant billing arrangements and the eligibility of non-medical surgical assistants for remuneration via the MBS.

Following extensive consultation processes the working group presented its final report and recommendation to the MRAC.

The MRAC endorsed the SAWG Final Report, and the Department of Health and Aged Care will now present it to Government for consideration. It will also be published in early 2023 on the MRAC webpage.

Members were briefed on the progress of current MRAC reviews

Colonoscopy Post Implementation Review

The Colonoscopy Working Group has been established to conduct a post implementation review of November 2019 colonoscopy item changes as recommended by the MBS Review Taskforce.

This post implementation review was referred to the MRAC by the Department of Health and Aged Care following an initial review of data, and feedback from the sector.

The first meeting of the Colonoscopy Working Group will occur in February 2023 and will include presentations from key stakeholders.

Vascular Interventional Radiology Services

A Vascular Interventional Radiology Working Group (VIRWG) is being established to undertake a review of vascular interventional radiology services.

This review was initiated by the Department of Health and Aged Care, following the MBS Review Taskforce's review of vascular services and further consultation with the sector.

Given the complex nature of this review, the VIRWG will include external expert membership. The first meeting of the VIRWG is expected to occur in early 2023.

Telehealth Post Implementation Review

The Department of Health and Aged Care previously tasked the MRAC with monitoring MBS telehealth and has briefed the MRAC at previous meetings.

The Minister has now formally requested the MRAC to undertake a post implementation review of MBS telehealth services and to provide advice by the end of 2023.

Members were briefed on the next MRAC review due for 2023 commencement

A post implementation review of 1 August 2020 changes to MBS ECG items, as directed by the former Minister for Health.

How the MRAC communicates with stakeholders

Seeking potential topics for review

MRAC review topics come from a number of sources. Individuals and organisations can propose a review for initial consideration by the Department of Health and Aged Care, by submitting a request under the MBS Continuous Review. The Review Request template is available on the Department of Health and Aged Care MRAC webpage.

Applicants are advised to check the MRAC Terms of Reference to ensure your request is appropriate. The Terms of Reference are also available on the Department of Health and Aged Care MRAC webpage.

Seeking expertise to inform review

To further inform MRAC reviews, stakeholders are invited to submit advice to the MRAC and its working groups. Relevant experts are invited to provide expertise to the committee and its working groups as needed.

Seeking feedback on MRAC assessments

Draft MRAC assessments and findings are sent to identified stakeholders for comment during the course of a review. Examples of the breadth of targeted stakeholder consultation are available in MRAC reports.

MRAC reports will typically be published for a public consultation period of 6 weeks via the Department of Health and Aged Care Consultation Hub.

Ensuring continuous stakeholder engagement

The MRAC Communique will be distributed quarterly to subscribed stakeholders, to provide updates on the work of the MRAC.

The Department of Health and Aged Care MRAC webpage also includes up to date information on MRAC reviews, membership and processes.

For further information on the MBS Continuous Review and MRAC processes, stakeholders are encouraged to visit the Department of Health and Aged Care website.