



Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) Storage Funding Program

8 August 2024

Information for ART cryostorage providers

This fact sheet provides an overview of the ART Storage Funding Program. The program aims to reduce the costs for preserving eggs, sperm, or embryos through cryostorage (freezing). This program is for two groups of people who face extra costs for preserving their fertility following a cancer diagnosis or following the results of their genetic testing.

Patient eligibility requirements

A patient is eligible for subsidised cryostorage under the program if they:

- Hold a valid Medicare card, and
- Seek cryostorage of:
 - up to two cryostorage services of different material types i.e., eggs, **or** sperm **and** embryos for fertility preservation due to a cancer diagnosis as evidenced by medical documentation, or
 - embryos for fertility preservation when there is a risk of passing on genetic conditions, and they have undergone pre-implantation genetic testing funded by the Medicare Benefit Schedule (MBS), as described in MBS items [13207](#), [73384](#), [73385](#), [73386](#) or [73387](#) (further information [here](#)), and
- Consent to their ART clinic sharing their relevant personal information with the Department of Health and Aged Care and Services Australia in order to facilitate their participation in the program, as in [Section 5](#) of these program guidelines.

Each eligible patient can access up to a maximum of ten years of subsidised cryostorage. The ten years do not need to be continuous.

Eligible cancer patients can access cryostorage funding for up to 2 items, and they can store eggs or sperm, and embryos for a up to ten years each.

One 'item' would include all storage samples of the same type of genetic material that are saved in one container. That is; multiple storage of eggs from multiple cycles stored together would comprise one yearly payment of \$600, and so forth).

Service eligibility requirements

Eligible patients' cryostorage services are only eligible for the program if they were placed in cryostorage with any facility on or after 1 July 2023.

ART clinic eligibility requirements

ART clinics are eligible to participate in the program where they:

- hold a current licence from the Reproductive Technology Accreditation Committee (RTAC),
- have registered with the Services Australia Organisation Register. (Detailed information on registration, the Services Australia payment mechanism, and how to make claims will be published in late 2023.), and
- have entered into a grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

ART clinic obligations

As an ART clinic you can claim a subsidy on behalf of an eligible patient if:

- You only claim the subsidy for patients and cryostorage services that are eligible for the program,
- You submit claims for the subsidy to Services Australia every 6 months,
- You do not charge any out-of-pocket costs for cryostorage services being subsidised under this program,
- You obtain written consent from all patients you are claiming subsidy for under the program. As part of this, patients must consent to their personal information relating to the program being shared with Services Australia and with the Department of Health and Aged Care. This information will facilitate payments on the patient's behalf. It may also be used for program assurance purposes, statistical and evaluation purposes and to inform policy development,
- You can provide evidence to support that each claim meets the eligibility requirements under the program when requested.

Detailed information on registration, the Services Australia payment mechanism, and how to make claims will be published in late 2023.

Patient obligations

Patients must inform their ART clinic if:

- their details change (for example your name, address, Medicare card number)
- if they don't need their materials in cryostorage any longer.

Cryostorage service volume limits

Eligible patients can access cryostorage funding for up to 2 items, for up to ten years. For example, they can store eggs *or* sperm, *and* embryos for a maximum of ten years each. The ten years do not need to be continuous.

One 'item' would include all storage samples of the same type of genetic material that are saved in one container. That is; multiple storage of eggs from multiple cycles stored together would comprise one yearly payment of \$600, and so forth.

Amount of subsidies

You will receive \$300 for each eligible service for each six-monthly cryostorage period. Payment is calculated on a monthly pro-rata basis. Materials will be subsidised for cryostorage from the first day of the month in which they are placed in cryostorage, to the last day of the month in which the cryostorage service ends.

How will the subsidy be paid?

Every 6 months, ART clinics will submit a claim to Services Australia for all eligible cryostorage services they provided over the previous 6 months.

Services Australia will validate claims, pay validated claims, and provide a payment statement with details to each ART clinic.

The first payment period will be 1 July to 31 December 2023. The first payments will be made in early 2024.

Detailed information on the Services Australia payment mechanism and how to make claims will be published in late 2023.

What if an eligible service is missed from the claim?

The clinic can include a missed claim in the next claim submission but not after that. This cannot be done if the patient has already paid for the service themselves.

What if a claim is not submitted in the claiming window?

The clinic can include a missed claim in the next claim submission but not after that. This cannot be done if the patient has already paid for the service themselves.

Program commencement

The program commenced on 1 July 2023 and is ongoing.

Further information

What happens if a patient dies?

If a patient dies with an embryo in storage, their surviving reproductive partner is considered eligible for this program and funding may continue in their name.

If a patient dies with sperm or eggs in storage and legal arrangements are in place to transfer ownership to another person, funding will continue until ownership has been transferred, up to a maximum period of 2 years.

How is the ten-year storage limit applied?

For the purposes of the program;

- There is a ten-year limit for cryostorage. However, this does not need to be continuous. This means that 'breaks' in cryostorage will not count towards the ten-year limit.
- Each type of material has its own ten-year limit. For example, the same eligible patient can store sperm for ten years, and then store embryos for ten years.
- If the patient wishes to continue to preserve their eggs, sperm or embryos after the funding limit expires, they must pay for cryostorage themselves.