



MBS Review Advisory Committee

Communique – Meeting 12

The Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) Review Advisory Committee (MRAC) is an independent, clinician and consumer-led, non-statutory committee established to advise government on publicly funded services listed on the MBS. The committee 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.

MRAC Membership

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

The 20 August 2024 MRAC meeting was the final meeting for five of our members, whose terms expire at the end of October.

- Dr Matthew Andrews (radiologist)
- Professor Wendy Brown (upper GI and bariatric surgeon)
- Professor Harriet Hiscock (consultant paediatrician)
- Associate Professor Ken Sikaris (pathologist)
- Ms Robyn Stephen (speech pathologist)

We thank each of the outgoing members for their collaboration and valued contributions to the MRAC and wish them well in their future endeavours.

MRAC Reviews

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

Findings and recommendations from MRAC working groups are subject to extensive consultation processes prior to MRAC consideration and finalisation. Following completion of a review, MRAC recommendations are submitted to Government for consideration.

Final reports from complete MRAC reviews are available on the [MRAC webpage](#).

MRAC Meeting 12 Outcomes – 20 August 2024

The committee meets quarterly, and most recently held its twelfth meeting virtually on 20 August 2024.



Current reviews

Post-implementation review of changes to electrocardiogram MBS items

The Electrocardiogram (ECG) Working Group was established to conduct a post-implementation review of the 1 August 2020 changes to ECG items. These changes were recommended by the MBS Review Taskforce and intended to promote high value care and address inadvertent misuse of MBS items. A draft report from the ECG Working Group was endorsed by MRAC to undergo a six-week public consultation, which commenced on 13 June 2024.

Following consideration of all feedback received from public consultation, the ECG working group finalised its report, which was presented to the committee at the 20 August meeting for endorsement.

The Final Report was endorsed by the committee and will be provided to Government for consideration. Publication of the Final Report on the Department's website will occur in the coming weeks.

Review of Vascular Interventional Radiology items

The Vascular Interventional Radiology (VIR) Working Group was established to conduct a review of Vascular Interventional Radiology items. The Department referred this review to the committee following the MBS Review Taskforce review of vascular items, and further consultation with the sector.

The VIR Working Group has held seven meetings, with its most recent meeting held on 8 August 2024.

The working group is currently developing a draft report which, following endorsement by the Committee, is anticipated to undergo public consultation in late 2024. A final report is expected to be completed in early 2025.

Review of Sport and Exercise Physicians' Classification and access under the MBS

The Department of Health and Aged Care referred this review to the committee following consideration of a review proposal from the Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians seeking access to consultant physician equivalent consultation MBS items.

At the 20 August 2024 MRAC meeting, the committee considered all feedback received from public consultation, and agreed to a recommendation which will now be provided to Government for consideration. Publication of this advice will occur in the coming weeks.

Commencement of new reviews

Review of Long-acting Reversible Contraceptives

In June 2024, the Hon Mark Butler, Minister of Health, and Aged Care, formally requested the MRAC undertake a review of MBS items used for insertion and removal of long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs). This review is part of the Government's commitment to investment in Women's Health. Initial advice will be provided to Government by the end of 2024, with a second tranche of recommendations to follow in 2025.

A LARC Working Group was established to consider current LARC MBS items and following a targeted stakeholder consultation process and consideration of MBS data, presented MRAC with initial recommendations at the 20 August 2024 MRAC meeting.

The Committee endorsed the recommendations, which will be provided to Government as initial advice for consideration. Further consultation processes are scheduled to occur on both the initial and secondary stages of this review.

The LARC working group will meet later this year to consider further recommendations.

Review of MBS time-tiered items for primary care

The committee commenced a review of MBS time-tiered items for primary care. The review will consider issues such as item consistency, opportunities to streamline, and whether the current time-tiers appropriately support contemporary clinical practice.

A Time-Tiered Working Group has now been established. Its first meeting is scheduled for early September 2024, with further meetings anticipated to be held over late 2024.

Consultation on a Findings Report is expected to commence in early 2025.

Review of Allied Health Services accessible under MBS Chronic Disease Management Arrangements

The committee agreed to establish a working group to lead a review of allied health services accessible under MBS Chronic Disease Management Arrangements. The review will assess whether allied health chronic disease management items should be amended to better support management of chronic conditions for eligible patients.

The committee endorsed the scope of the review and the establishment of a working group at its August 2024 meeting.

Next meeting

The MRAC will meet next on 12 – 13 November 2024.