



# IMPROVING MEDICARE COMPLIANCE

AUGUST 2023

Practitioners are responsible for all Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) services claimed under their Medicare provider number and for Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) medications issued under their prescriber number. It is therefore important to ensure all items claimed are accurate and appropriate for the services provided.

There are steps you can take to ensure that you are claiming MBS items and prescribing PBS medications appropriately.



## 1 Claiming MBS and PBS items

**Prior to claiming an MBS item or writing a PBS prescription:**

- Check you have met all the **MBS item descriptor** requirements, including any minimum time requirements, and refer to the **MBS explanatory notes** to assist with your claiming.
- Check you have met the **PBS criteria**, including any restrictions and authority requirements.
- Ensure the service you have provided is **clinically relevant**. Medicare benefits are only claimable for clinically relevant services. A clinically relevant service is one which is generally accepted by the relevant profession as necessary for the appropriate treatment of the patient. For example, even where you have met the MBS item descriptor requirements, a service may not be clinically relevant if the service was not medically necessary for the patient. Each prescription provided must also be clinically relevant.

## Resources

There are online resources to help you understand how to claim your MBS and PBS items correctly. MBS Online ([mbsonline.gov.au](http://mbsonline.gov.au)) provides detailed information on MBS items, including:

- Item descriptors**
- Explanatory notes**
- Fact sheets**
- Latest news**.

## 2 Monitor the appropriateness of your services and prescribing

You should routinely review the items you claim under Medicare and your PBS prescribing. Remember, you are responsible for all claims made using your provider and prescriber numbers.

If you think that you have incorrectly claimed a Medicare benefit, you can let us know and repay any amounts owing. To do this, please complete a '**Voluntary Acknowledgement of Incorrect Payments**' form, which you can find by going to [health.gov.au](http://health.gov.au) and searching for 'voluntary acknowledgement'.

You can also contact [askMBS@health.gov.au](mailto:askMBS@health.gov.au) for advice on the interpretation of MBS items and rules. AskMBS has published a collection of **AskMBS Advisories** to assist you to understand and comply with MBS billing requirements.

You can find information about PBS requirements, including restrictions and Authority requirements for specific PBS items at [pbs.gov.au](http://pbs.gov.au).

Other information about PBS requirements may be found in the **PBS Frequently Asked Questions**.

For more information on the Department of Health's compliance activities and educational materials go to **Medicare Compliance**. There are **MBS education resources** and **PBS education resources** on the **Services Australia Website**.