



Free early intervention mental health support for patients available

Health professional fact sheet

6 January 2026

The Australian Government has established a new digital early intervention service, *Medicare Mental Health Check In*, to provide free low-intensity mental health support for people living in Australia.

Medicare Mental Health Check In

Medicare Mental Health Check In has launched.

The service will offer:

- Low-intensity Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (LiCBT) delivered by skilled and trained practitioners via phone or video.
- Evidence-based online tools for people who are willing and able to try self-guided support.

All services will be free and available without a diagnosis or GP referral.

Medicare Mental Health Check In will roll out in stages over 3 years, starting from 1 January 2026. It is expected to support more than 150,000 people each year from 2029.

A digital service for mild mental health challenges

Medicare Mental Health Check In will support people:

- living in Australia
- aged 16 years and older
- experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, mild mental challenges or transient distress
- who could benefit from LiCBT.

LiCBT has been shown to support people with mild symptoms of anxiety or depression.

Improving mental health and wellbeing

By encouraging people to seek help early, Medicare Mental Health Check In can help them manage their mental health and wellbeing before their challenges get worse.

The service aims to empower patients and build resilience by teaching skills to help them manage their thoughts, feelings and behaviours. This will also reduce pressure on higher-intensity services.

What this means for health professionals

As health professionals, you will play a key role by raising awareness of Medicare Mental Health Check In, especially in your communities. You are encouraged to have conversations with suitable patients to let them know about the free service.

Following an open competitive approach to market, St Vincent's Health Australia was selected as the service provider to deliver Medicare Mental Health Check In.

With a strong clinical track record, St Vincent's Health Australia has worked closely with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing to co-design the implementation timeline, ensuring it is clinically sound, feasible, and responsive to user needs.

When services will be available for patients

People across Australia can now visit the new Medicare Mental Health Check In website to explore the service, understand what it offers and access a range of mental health resources. Evidence-based materials will be available to help users understand what they are experiencing, offer self-care strategies and suggest places they can seek support. These resources will be translated for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

From 30 March 2026, people will be able to access LiCBT delivered by trained practitioners via scheduled telehealth appointments.

From 30 May 2026, people will be able to access structured, evidence-based self-guided LiCBT modules through the Medicare Mental Health Check In user portal.

Self-guided LiCBT allows people to engage with therapy at their own pace and in their own time.

People will be able to seamlessly switch between guided and self-guided therapy whenever they like, so the care is personal, flexible and responsive.

How will people access the service

To access Medicare Mental Health Check In, people will need to first speak to the Medicare Mental Health phone service (1800 595 212) to ensure the service is suitable for their needs.

Working together to design the service

The Department undertook targeted consultation from October to December 2024 to inform the design of Medicare Mental Health Check In.

Over 180 stakeholders from more than 90 organisations were consulted, including service providers, national peak bodies, representatives of people with lived experience of mental health challenges and priority populations, clinicians, national and international experts, and states and territories.

The Department has established an Expert Advisory Group (EAG) to provide strategic guidance and advice on the design and implementation of the service.

The Department's Chief Psychiatrist chairs the EAG. The group includes members with experience in health service delivery, including digital health and mental health, lived experience of mental health challenges, clinical and professional expertise (including primary care), and research and academic expertise.

The service will be independently evaluated by Monash University, in partnership with the University of Melbourne, to ensure it is working effectively as well as inform future policy.