



FACT SHEET: COVID-19 MBS TELEHEALTH ITEMS STAGED ROLLOUT

Monday 23 March 2020

As part of the Government's \$2.4 billion health plan to fight COVID-19 and protect all Australians, including vulnerable groups, temporary MBS telehealth items have been added in a staged response to ensure patients can receive vital and urgent health care during the current health emergency.

From today the Government has moved to Stage 3 allowing all vulnerable general practitioners and other vulnerable health professionals who are currently authorised to use telehealth item numbers, to use telehealth for all consultations with all their patients.

The new COVID-19 telehealth measures will help reduce community transmission of COVID-19 and provide protection for providers and patients alike.

STAGE	COVID-19 MBS TELEHEALTH ITEMS
Stage 1 March 13	The Government began progressively opening access under the Medicare Benefits Schedule to telehealth for many consultations between patients and their general practitioners, mental health providers and medical specialists, where patients or GPs were required to self-isolate, or patients were considered vulnerable.
Stage 2 WC March 16	Expansion of MBS telehealth items for midwives and recognise a general practice for continuity of care (rather than an individual GP)
Stage 3 CURRENT STATUS WC March 23	<p>From today the Government will allow all vulnerable general practitioners and other vulnerable health professionals who are currently authorised to use telehealth item numbers, to use telehealth for all consultations with all their patients. This includes health care providers who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aged at least 70 years old.• Indigenous and aged at least 50 years old.• Pregnant.• A parent of a child under 12 months.• Immune compromised.• Have a chronic medical condition that results in increased risk from coronavirus infection.
Stage 4 Moving Towards	The Government is consulting with the AMA, RACGP ACRRM, RDAA and other stakeholders to co-design stage 4 will be a whole of population response. The co-design will look to the best practice expansion of telehealth items for all patients, with or without COVID-19, to see any general practitioner, medical specialist, mental health or allied health professional during the COVID-19 health emergency.