



# FACT SHEET

# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

## NATIONAL HEALTH PLAN

## Primary Care Package – MBS Telehealth Services and increased Practice Incentive Payments

Increased Practice Incentive Payments, Bulk Billing Incentives and new temporary Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items allow doctors, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals including mental health, to provide telehealth services, encourage practices to bulk bill patients and ensure patients can still access face-to-face care.

### Why is this important?

The new MBS items allow all Australians to access essential health services in their home while they undergo self-isolation or quarantine, and reduce the risk of exposure to Coronavirus (COVID-19) for the community. These services will be available until 30 September 2020. Should the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) recommend extensions, these will be considered by the Government

It is essential that GP practices remain open to protect patients whose conditions require a face-to-face service. Providing additional payments to GP practices will support them to keep their doors open and provide at least four hours per day of face-to-face appointments for patients and treatments that can't be provided through telehealth. This will ensure continuity of care which promotes good health outcomes, and help take the pressure off our hospitals.

Additional bulk billing incentives for concessional patients and patients under 16 support their access to timely services, and recognise the additional demands on our doctors at this time.

### Who benefits?

Telehealth services are available to all Australians with a Medicare card.

Concession card holders will be bulk-billed for all telehealth consultations.

GP Practices receive additional Government support to continue to provide essential primary care services.

Telehealth services help protect frontline doctors, nurses and mental health providers, as well as patients, from unnecessary exposure to risk of infection.

### Where can I find out more?

Additional guides to these services for providers are available via [MBS Online](#).