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# Medicare Benefits Schedule Review Taskforce

## Diagnostic Imaging Clinical Committee

### Bone Densitometry Report

# Taskforce Findings

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This document outlines the Medical Benefits Schedule (MBS) Taskforce’s recommendations relating to bone densitometry.

The Taskforce considered the recommendations from the Diagnostic Imaging Clinical Committee and feedback from the public consultation.

The Taskforce endorsed all of the recommendations from the Diagnostic Imaging Clinical Committee relating to bone densitometry and submitted them to the Minister for Health for Government consideration.

<b>Number of items reviewed</b>	7
<b>Number of recommendations made</b>	5

The recommendations reflect clinical evidence that indicates regular testing for most people is not required and also current practice with respect to regulation of providers of the services.

## List of Taskforce recommendations

### 1. New items for repeat testing with intervals

The Taskforce recommends the introduction of intervals for bone densitometry (currently item 12323) for the measurement of bone mineral density, for a person aged 70 years or over. This would involve the introduction of two new items with defined intervals.

#### *New items*

- Δ Normal or mild osteopenia (down to T score of -1.5 when compared to their same gender young normal mean (i.e. young normal defined as individuals between the ages of 21 and 29 years)) 1 scan every 5 years; and
- Δ Moderate to marked osteopenia (T score of -1.5 to -2.5 when compared to their same gender young normal mean (i.e. young normal defined as individuals between the ages of 21 and 29 years)) 1 scan every 2 years.

## **2. Clarification on who can perform dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry (DEXA)**

The Taskforce recommends that a person who holds a radiation licence from the relevant State or Territory jurisdiction can perform a DEXA scan, under the supervision of an appropriately qualified specialist or consultant physician. This is currently usual practice.

## **3. Remove items for quantitative computed tomography (QCT)**

The Taskforce recommends that items for QCT scans (12309 and 12318) are removed from the MBS, on the basis that QCT provides lower value care in comparison to DEXA, which is the superior test for bone densitometry.

## **4. Interpretation and report provided by a specialist or consultant physician**

The Taskforce recommends that the interpretation and report for bone densitometry and QCT scans must be provided by a specialist or consultant physician.

## **5. Site measurements for QCT and DEXA items**

The Taskforce recommends that the Department of Health undertake further work to determine the most appropriate way to include site measurements for the spine and the hip in the item descriptor and explanatory notes.

Information and evidence supporting each of these recommendations is included in the Diagnostic Imaging Clinical Committee report.