



FACT SHEET

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

NATIONAL HEALTH PLAN

Primary Care – Bulk Billed MBS Telehealth Services

Temporary Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) and Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) items will allow doctors, nurses and mental health professionals to deliver services via telehealth, provided those services are bulk billed.

Why is this important?

The new MBS items will allow people to access essential health services in their home while they undergo self-isolation or quarantine, and reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for vulnerable people in the community.

This is a temporary six-month measure. Should the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) recommend an extension, it will be considered by the Government.

Who benefits?

Telehealth services will be available to:

- people isolating themselves at home on the advice of a medical practitioner, in accordance with home isolation guidance issued by the AHPPC, and people who meet the current national triage protocol criteria for suspected COVID-19 infection after consultation with either the national COVID-19 hotline, state COVID-19 hotlines, registered medical or nursing practitioner or COVID-19 trained health clinic triage staff
- people aged over 70
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged over 50
- people with chronic health conditions or who are immunocompromised
- parents with new babies and people who are pregnant.

People in isolation or quarantine for COVID-19 can see any eligible health provider through new telehealth items. Patients in vulnerable groups can additionally see a health provider via telehealth for a non-COVID-19 matter if they have seen that provider face-to-face at least once in the previous 12 months.

How much will this cost?

This will cost provisionally \$100 million over 2019-20 and 2020-21.