



FACT SHEET - AFTER HOURS OTHER MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS (AHOMPS)

From 1 January 2019, the After Hours Other Medical Practitioners Program (AHOMPs) will close to new participants.

Doctors currently participating in the AHOMPs will be grandfathered and can continue to access the higher Vocationally Recognised (VR) items in the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) until 30 June 2023.

WHY IS THE AHOMPS CEASING ON 1 JANUARY 2019?

One initiative under the Stronger Rural Health Strategy, announced in the 2018-19 Budget is the reform of MBS access for doctors. The aim of the reform is to reward investment in attaining general practice fellowship and encourage more doctors to work in regional, rural and remote areas of Australia.

One part of this reform is to close the Other Medical Practitioner (OMP) programs to new participants from 1 January 2019. These programs are:

- Medicare Plus for Other Medical Practitioners Program (MOMPs)
- Rural Other Medical Practitioners Program (ROMPs)
- After Hours Other Medical Practitioners Program (AHOMPs)
- Outer Metropolitan Other Medical Practitioners Program (OMOMPs)

I AM CURRENTLY ON THE AHOMPS – HOW LONG CAN I STAY ON THIS PROGRAM?

Under the grandfathering arrangements, eligible doctors who are participating on any of the OMPs programs will be given up to 30 June 2023 to fulfill their commitment to obtain fellowship. Doctors must continue to meet the eligibility requirements of the OMPs program to maintain access.

Doctors on the AHOMPs are required to obtain fellowship within 6 years of registration on the AHOMPs program. Under the AHOMPs guidelines the period can be extended if there are extenuating circumstances. Requests for extensions are approved on a case by case basis by the Department of Health.



IF I MOVE TO A NEW PRACTICE CAN I STILL ACCESS AHOMPS?

Yes. Grandfathered doctors who move to an eligible location can still apply to access the higher VR items under AHOMPs until 30 June 2023.

IF I AM ALREADY ON THE AHOMPS, CAN I APPLY TO ANOTHER OMPs PROGRAM?

Yes. Doctors who were enrolled on one of the closing OMPs programs as at 1 January 2019 can make an application to join one of the other OMPs programs if they are eligible. For example, an eligible doctor participating in the AHOMPs can apply for access to the higher VR items at a new practice through the ROMPs. Information about OMPs program eligibility is available on the Department of Health website.

IF I AM CURRENTLY ON THE AHOMPS, DO I NEED TO DO ANYTHING TO BE GRANDFATHERED?

No. If a doctor is already on an OMPs Program, there will be no change. Eligible doctors will be able to continue to claim the higher VR items up to 30 June 2023.

HOW WILL I CONTINUE TO ACCESS VR ITEMS AFTER 30 JUNE 2023?


The aim of this measure is to encourage vocational recognition through fellowship of a general practice college. A doctor who has obtained fellowship, or, who is participating in a formal pathway to fellowship through the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) or the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) will be able to access higher VR items.

WILL I BE GIVEN SUPPORT TO WORK TOWARDS FELLOWSHIP?

As part of the Stronger Rural Health Strategy the Department is providing funding for a Fellowship Support Program to support non-vocationally registered (non-VR) doctors to attain fellowship. The Fellowship Support Program will be delivered through the RACGP and ACRRM and will be available from 2019.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE 30 JUNE 2023, CAN I STILL CLAIM A MEDICARE BENEFIT?

Yes. Doctors who have an active Medicare Provider Number and are currently claiming Medicare benefits will be able to access the items for non-VR GPs.



Non-VR GPs working in Modified Monash 2-7 locations can access items from Group A7 of the MBS. These items are set at 80% of the equivalent VR items.

Non-VR GPs practising in metropolitan areas (Modified Monash 1) will be able claim:

- A2 items for standard GP services;
- A19 items for attendances associated with Practice Incentive Payments; and
- A7 items for all other relevant subgroups.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

For general OMPs policy enquiries –

The Department of Health: OMPs@health.gov.au

For application procedures and eligibility –

The Department of Human Services – Medicare:
provider.registration@humanservices.gov.au

For Fellowship enquiries –

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners: www.racgp.org.au

The Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine: www.acrrm.org.au