



The new AMDS Program Guidelines have been significantly updated to provide a document that is simplified, clearer, and easy to read. The Guidelines have been split into two sections: service provider requirements, and doctor requirements.

The table below outlines the major changes made, including content that has been relocated. These guidelines take effect from 1 August 2020.

Service Providers: Refer to the ‘Medical Deputising Services’ section of the Guidelines.

| Old Guidelines | New Guidelines | Page |
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| Preliminary | Replaced with a succinct introduction about the AMDS, defining the after-hours period and accessing the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS). | 3 |
| Principles | Moved relevant information into the new Introduction and has removed repetition. | 3 |
| Definitions | Updated with more accurate descriptions and includes additional definitions. | 4 |
| Eligibility of service provider | Topics not directly related to eligibility have been moved to other areas of the guidelines, such as compliance issues. | 6 |
| Application process for service provider | The new guidelines remove repetition and make the application process easier to follow with a clear step-by-step guide including the documents required when submitting applications. A new clause was added about Health being able to consider the past performance of the MDS including any breaches. | 6 |
| Renewal of approval for service provider | As renewals follow the same process as new applications, this content has been combined into the ‘Application process’ section. Processing timeframes added. | 6 |
| Transfer of service ownership | Added information for circumstances where an AMDS Service Provider is sold to new ownership. | 7 |
| Length of deed | Added information about the service provider who has previously held a deed, can be considered for a shorter term extension after the initial 3 years accreditation. | 7 |
| Responsibilities of AMDS | New clause added about defining the responsibilities of an AMDS. Information about responsibilities have been brought together in the eligibility section, and information on provision of care to patients who have not been referred by their primary caregiver has been added. | 8 |
| Supervision | Additional point under AMDS responsibilities regarding supervision obligations. Outlines requirements for a supervisor to submit a supervision plan to the Medical Board of Australia (MBA) through the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) where appropriate. Other supervision requirements left unchanged. | 8 |
| Declaration for service provider | Additional requirement re: providing a list of supervisors assigned to each doctor. | 8 |

AMDS Program – Summary of changes

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| Call Centre | Amended. Call centres will be required to operate for the entire Commonwealth defined after-hours period but will not be required to be state or territory based – call centres can now be nationally based. | 9 |
| Advertising | Now includes a separate clause regarding direct or database advertising restrictions that apply to service providers under the AMDS Program. The guidelines refer to the RACGP Advertising Standards. Advice on the use of website and smartphone bookings has been added. | 9 |
| Compliance | New clause added about compliance issues. Examples of possible breaches are provided for noting. | 10 |
| Review of Decision | New guidelines outline how Health will undertake reviews and lists the documents required. | 10 |

Participants: Refer to the ‘Doctors’ section of the Guidelines.

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| Eligibility of doctors | Eligibility criteria for doctors provides a list of all the criteria for a doctor to be considered for an AMDS placement. The new guidelines remove the requirement to obtain a General Practice Experience Assessment Report from the RACGP. | 11 |
| Eligibility of doctors | New guidelines now permit doctors with limited, provisional or general registration to apply for an AMDS placement. | 11 |
| Renewal of placements for doctors | As renewals follow the same process as new applications, this content has been combined into the ‘Application process’ section. Processing timeframes added. | 11 |
| Standards for participation | ‘Standards for Participation’ has been moved into the respective new clauses. | n/a |
| Role of organisations involved with the AMDS Program. | Simpler information regarding the role of Health, service providers and doctors. | 12 |
| Placement duration | New guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation of 2 years on the AMDS Program. - Extension past 2 years considered on an annual basis, and requires evidence the applicant has joined a college led fellowship program. - Doctors can continue to participate on the AMDS Program while they participate in a formal fellowship program, up to a maximum period of 10 years. - Doctors who withdraw or are removed from a college led program before attaining fellowship must notify Health, and will be given 6 months to find an alternate 3GA program, if eligible, or be removed from the Program. - Outlines the transitional arrangements for current AMDS participants who have exceeded 2 years. | 12 |
| Compliance | Process for reviewing potential breaches of the Guidelines, and termination of placements is provided under the Compliance heading. | 13 |
| Review process | New guidelines provide additional information on Health’s undertaking reviews and lists the documents to be submitted. | 13 |