



FUNDING BEST PRACTICE CARE FOR PATIENTS WITH ANOREXIA NERVOSA AND PATIENTS WITH OTHER EATING DISORDERS WITH COMPLEX CARE NEEDS

The Australian Government is making changes to the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) to introduce a comprehensive stepped care model for patients with anorexia nervosa and patients with other eating disorders who have complex care needs. These changes follow recommendations from the MBS Review Taskforce.

What are the changes?

New Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items will be introduced to provide for a comprehensive stepped care model for patients with anorexia nervosa and other patients with eating disorders who have complex care needs and who are at high risk of serious medical and psychological complications.

From 1 November 2019, eligible patients will be able to receive a Medicare rebate for the development and review of a comprehensive treatment and management plan and up to 40 psychological and 20 dietetic sessions per year, depending on their treatment needs.

Why are these changes being made?

The introduction of the comprehensive stepped care model will align the MBS arrangements with best practice care for this patient group.

Evidence indicates that this higher level of treatment services is correlated with a reduced rate of repeat hospitalisation and improved health outcomes for this patient group.

The changes were recommended by the MBS Review Taskforce following consultation with key stakeholder organisations.

The Taskforce is conducting a clinician-led review, and makes recommendations to the Government on how the MBS can be modernised to improve patient safety, support equity of access and reduce waste.

What does this mean for patients?

The comprehensive stepped care approach for anorexia nervosa and complex eating disorders is expected to provide positive health and social impacts. Patients will benefit as they will be able to access an increased number of psychological and dietetic services than currently available through the MBS. This will improve access as well as assist patients in meeting the costs associated with their treatment.

What does this mean for practitioners?

Practitioners will benefit as they will have certainty that they will be able to deliver a full course of evidence based treatment as their patients should receive Medicare benefits for the services they provide.

Practitioners affected by these changes will receive further information closer to the implementation date.

Further detail will be available on
www.mbsonline.gov.au