

Medicare Rebates for Psychology Services

The Government has introduced new Medicare items for psychological treatment by registered psychologists. Under the scheme there are two ways that you can receive a substantial rebate from Medicare for psychological treatment, which makes seeing a psychologist much more affordable. One is the Mental Health Plan, the other is the Enhanced Primary Care Plan.

All Heartful Minds psychologists have a Medicare Provider number, which means they are eligible to participate in this Medicare initiative. Heartful Minds' psychologists are experts in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), an evidence-based psychological treatment which is effective for a wide range of psychological disorders.

Mental Health Plan

How do I register for the Medicare rebate with a Mental Health Plan?

In order to participate in this Medicare initiative, you will need to see your GP first to be assessed. It is not necessary to have the specific psychologist's name on the referral. The GP will then register you with Medicare with a Mental Health Plan and will initially refer you to the psychologist for six sessions. After the six sessions, upon review by your GP, you may be eligible for a further four psychological treatment sessions.

Who can make the referral for me to see a psychologist?

Your GP, a psychiatrist or a paediatrician can all make a referral for you to see a Heartful Minds psychologist. A psychiatrist or a paediatrician does not need to create a Mental Health Plan, just a referral letter is enough.

How many sessions am I entitled to?

In total, eligible people can generally receive:

- Up to 10 individual services in a calendar year (six under the initial plan then a further four for extenuating circumstances)
- Up to 10 group therapy services in a calendar year where such services are available.

Who is eligible to participate in the Mental Health Plan Medicare Scheme?

Medicare defines eligibility for the scheme by identifying if the individual is experiencing one of a range of clinically diagnosable disorders that significantly impact on a person's emotions, thoughts, social skills and decision making.

The following are some examples of the range of issues which are eligible under the Medicare scheme:

- Phobias / fears / worries
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Adjustment problems
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Unexplained physical complaints / headaches
- Eating problems
- Sleep problems
- Bereavement
- Drug use disorders
- Panic disorder
- Alcohol use disorders

Enhanced Primary Care Plan

How do I register for the Medicare rebate with an Enhanced Primary Care Plan?

As with a Mental Health Plan, you need to see your GP first to be assessed. The GP will then register you with Medicare under an Enhanced Primary Care Plan which entitles you to a maximum of five sessions with a psychologist.

The Enhanced Primary Care Plan is for anyone with a chronic medical condition, which is one that has been (or is likely to be) present for six months or longer. It includes conditions such as asthma, cancer, diabetes, musculoskeletal conditions, bedwetting and obesity etc.

Patients have complex care needs if they need ongoing care from a multi-disciplinary team consisting of their GP and at least two other health care providers.

Does the Medicare Safety Net apply to my out-of-pocket expenses under this initiative?

Yes. You are responsible for paying any charges in excess of the Medicare rebate for items under this initiative. However, these out-of-pocket expenses will count towards the Medicare Safety Net.

What about my private health insurance?

You cannot use your private health insurance ancillary cover to top up the Medicare rebates for psychological services.

You need to decide if you will use Medicare or your private health insurance ancillary cover to pay for psychological services. It may be a good idea to call your private health

insurer to see how much money per session they will rebate you for psychological services. Also ask them if there is a cap on how many services per year you are able to claim for.

How do I find out more information about this initiative?

For more detailed information on the Allied Mental Health Professional Medicare Items, please go to www.health.gov.au or call Medicare Australia 132 150.

Heartful Minds is approved for NDIS. Please discuss your plan with reception as a gap payment may be required.