



Budget 2024-25

This information is accurate as of 14 May 2024.

Mental health

This measure will improve the Better Access Initiative to better meet the needs of individuals and improve equity of access. It expands the range and reach of free mental health services available.

GPs will be supported through new guidance to assess the mental health needs of people and refer them to the most appropriate services. This guidance will be developed with the health professionals sector. This change will better target the Better Access Initiative to people with at least moderate intensity care needs who will benefit the most.

GPs will be able to use standard consultation items to review mental health treatment plans and deliver mental health care, instead of having to use dedicated GP mental health Medicare items. The Mental Health Treatment Planning items will remain available for GPs to use.

Guidance for health professionals will be updated to better support the use of other Medicare-subsidised allied health services for patients with chronic mental health conditions and complex care needs. This is in line with current eligibility for these services.

To support continuity of care, referrals to Better Access will be required to be made by a GP at:

- a person's MyMedicare-registered practice
- their usual GP if they aren't registered for MyMedicare.

This measure is being led by the Department of Health and Aged Care. Services Australia will get \$1 million from 2024–25 through to 2027–28 to support this measure.

This measure is subject to legislation passing.

Who this measure affects

This affects patients who use the Better Access Initiative.

When this starts and finishes

This measure starts 1 November 2025 and is ongoing.