



Budget 2026-27

This information is accurate as of 12 May 2026.

Strengthening Medicare

CATEGORY: Health and disability

This measure contains a number of elements to strengthen Medicare, which include:

- the continuation of funding for Medicare Urgent Care Clinics
- investing in a modernised My Health Record to drive a digitally connected health care system for all Australians
- listing new and amended services on the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS).

These elements will improve health care access and affordability for Australians.

This measure also contains a number of elements to strengthen the integrity of Medicare, prevent fraud and improve fraud detection capabilities.

Continuation of funding for Medicare Urgent Care Clinics

This element will continue the Medicare Urgent Care Clinics program. It builds on successive investments since the 2022-23 October Budget, supporting the government's commitment to strengthening Medicare.

The program aims to:

- enable most Australians continued access to affordable urgent care across extended hours
- free-up capacity in hospitals to focus on life-threatening conditions
- avoid gaps in service continuity.

This element will provide Services Australia with an additional 4 years' funding from 2026-27 to support the 137 established or announced Urgent Care Clinics within the program.

Investing in a modernised My Health Record to drive a digitally connected health care system for all Australians

This element identifies savings to the MBS, through the *Modernising My Health Record (Sharing by Default) Act 2025*. From 1 July 2026, a legislative rule comes into effect that requires pathology and diagnostic imaging results to be shared to My Health Record by default.

Increased access to pathology and diagnostic results for patients and all members of their health care team supports more seamless and coordinated care. It will also reduce duplication of tests and associated MBS claims.

Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) – new and amended listings

This element lists new and amended services on the MBS.

From 1 July 2026:

- 2 new items for level 2 polysomnography out-of-laboratory sleep studies for the investigation of sleep disordered breathing in children and adolescents.

- Amendments to radiation oncology item 15994 for stereotactic body radiation therapy to allow treatment to 2 tumour sites per day. Currently, patients can only receive treatment to 1 tumour per day.
- A new item to provide testing of Fibroblast Growth Factor Receptor 2 fusions, or rearrangements, and Isocitrate dehydrogenase variant status for patients with cholangiocarcinoma, to determine eligibility for a relevant treatment under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).
- Partial reversal of ophthalmology changes proposed as part of the MBS New and Amended Listings from the 2024-25 Budget. Intravitreal eye injections won't be reclassified from Type B procedures (in-hospital) to Type C procedures (out-of-hospital) in instances where the service doesn't require anaesthetic delivered by an anaesthetist.

From 1 November 2026:

- Applying claim restrictions, system controls and fraud prevention measures to high-priced items to better control and detect fraudulent claiming of specific MBS items.
- Amendment to pathology item 71099 to remove restrictions on the Crithidia method. This will enable pathology providers access to a greater choice of double stranded DNA antibodies (dsDNA-ab) test methods following the discontinuation of a product for dsDNA-ab testing.
- Amendment to item 61564 for whole body prostate specific membrane antigen positron emission tomography study for the restaging of recurrent prostate adenocarcinoma to allow the item to be claimed once in a 12-month period, up from the current twice per lifetime limit.
- Amendments to the *Health Insurance Regulations 2018* to allow nurse practitioners to request 6 bone mineral densitometry items.
- Amendment to the description of item 45518 to allow the item to be provided in both an in and out-patient setting.
- Amendment to item 14245 to allow administration 'by or on behalf of a registered medical practitioner'.
- Reintroducing General Practitioner (GP) telephone services for Chronic Condition Management and reviewing phone items for GP and Prescribed Medical Practitioners. This is in line with recommendations by the Medicare Review Advisory Committee post implementation review of MBS Telehealth.
- Amendments to 6 psychiatry inpatient telehealth services to permanently list these items on the MBS and amend the subsequent consultation claiming restriction from one time-tiered service in a 7-day period to 2.
- Amendment to the clinical criteria for item 11607 ambulatory blood pressure monitoring to facilitate access for child and adolescent patients.
- Amendments to 189 oral and maxillofacial service items to realign it with the equivalent Therapeutic Procedure items. This will be implemented by amending 85 existing items, creating 19 new items and ending 85 obsolete items.
- Amendment to item 73433 for neurotrophic tyrosine receptor kinase (NTRK) testing to include patients with glioma, glioneuronal tumour or glioblastoma. The amendment will close any potential NTRK testing access gaps to a PBS-listed drug.
- Amendments to MBS items 73358, 73359 and 73360 to remove the mandatory requirement for paediatricians to consult a clinical geneticist before requesting genetic testing for childhood syndromes. This will improve patient access and equity, particularly in rural and remote areas.

From 1 March 2027:

- A new item that consolidates and replaces 3 existing items for the repair of shoulder rotator cuff tears, plus a new item for the repair of complex shoulder rotator cuff tears. This ensures patients receive appropriate rebates when more complex surgery is required.

- Removal of 3 standalone shoulder subacromial decompression items, as recommended by the Orthopaedic Implementation Liaison Group.
- New items for trained participating midwives to provide Long Acting Reversible Contraception services for contraceptive purposes.

Services Australia will get \$55.0 million through to 2029-30 to implement the measure.

This measure is led by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

This measure is subject to legislation passing.

Who this measure affects

This affects patients who are eligible for these MBS items and health professionals providing these services.

When this starts and finishes

The continuation of Urgent Care Clinics starts 1 July 2026 and ends on 30 June 2030.

Investing in a modernised My Health Record starts on 1 July 2026 and ends 30 June 2028.

The new and amended MBS listings are effective from the dates stated and are ongoing.

Strengthening the integrity of Medicare starts on 1 July 2026 and is ongoing.