



Incentives News Update

Practice Incentives Program (PIP) Quality Improvement (QI) Incentive

Change of practice details or withdrawing from PIP QI—Update your practice details in HPOS by 15 October

To avoid delayed PIP QI payments, practices should make their changes in HPOS no later than the 15th of the last month of a PIP QI quarter (October, January, April and July).

Reminder regarding PIP QI exemption arrangements—Submit your PIP QI data by 15 October

To be paid in the November payment quarter, practices previously granted an exemption must now submit their PIP Eligible Data set to their PHN by 15 October 2020. The PIP QI data exemption period ended on 31 July 2020.

Guidance materials have been released to software vendors, practices and PHNs to assist with developing data sharing solutions in readiness for the November 2020 PIP payment quarter.

Go to health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/PIP-QI_Incentive_guidance to read the PIP QI—User Guide, Annotated Specifications and Technical Specifications.

Continuous Quality Improvement activities and PIP Eligible Data Set

For PIP QI, practices are reminded that they may focus quality improvement (QI) activities on the ten specified Improvement Measures.

Alternatively, practices may focus QI activities on areas informed by their clinical information system data and which meet the needs of their practice population.

For more information on the Improvement Measures, you can go to health.gov.au and search for PIP QI Incentive guidance.



If practices, software vendors or PHNs have concerns about not meeting the 15 October deadline, they must inform the Department of Health by 30 September 2020.

If you have any questions, please email PIPQIexemptions@health.gov.au



The assessment process to accredit general practices under the NGPA Scheme

General practices are accredited under the rules set out in the National General Practice Accreditation Scheme (NGPA) Scheme. The primary aim of the NGPA Scheme is to ensure assessments to the *Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Standards for general practices* are consistent and rigorous. Under the NGPA Scheme, five accrediting agencies are approved to assess general practices:

- Australian Council on Healthcare and Standards (ACHS)
- Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited (AGPAL)
- Global-Mark Pty Ltd
- Institute for Health Communities Australia Certification Pty Ltd
- Quality Practice Accreditation Pty Ltd (QPA)

The assessment of general practices to the *RACGP Standards for general practices* occurs on a three year standardised accreditation cycle. Accrediting agencies cannot amend the accreditation cycle, including the commencement and expiry date.



The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission), the organisation that oversees the NGPA Scheme has the authority to extend a general practice's accreditation period in a limited number of circumstances.

Go to safetyandquality.gov.au/node/3416 to read *Advisory GP18/01 Extensions to the accreditation status*.



At an Onsite Assessment

A general practice must comply with all of the mandatory indicators to be awarded accreditation. Where mandatory indicators have not been met, a general practice has a remediation period of up to 90 days (or 65 business days) to take action and provide evidence of compliance, ensuring all mandatory indicators are met.

General practices are encouraged to keep in regular contact with their accrediting agency and to undertake their assessment well in advance of their expiry date. By being proactive, practices reduce the risk of having a gap in their accreditation status. A gap may affect the eligibility of a general practice to apply for programs where a continuous and ongoing accreditation status is required.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, temporary measures are in place whilst issuing accreditation certificates and onsite assessments are on hold. If a general practice has any questions about its accreditation or the onsite assessment process, please contact the Commission's Advice Centre at accreditation@safetyandquality.gov.au or **1800 304 056**.

For more information go to safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/primary-care/ and click on National Practice Accreditation Scheme.

Practice Relocation

Permanent relocation

If a general practice relocates, you will need to complete and submit the following forms to us:

- Practice Incentives Change of practice details (IPO05) form.
- Practice Incentives Individual general practitioner, nurse practitioner or health professional details (IPO03) form. This form is required for all practitioners who join the practice or change location as part of the relocation.

All current practitioners must obtain a new provider number for a relocated practice address.

You will also need to provide Services Australia with an accreditation certificate with the new practice address **within 6 months** of relocating.

We will withhold practice payments until you have provided us with a copy of your accreditation certificate with your new location address. To be eligible for any withheld payments, the date on the accreditation certificate must be the same as the date of relocation.

Temporary arrangements introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic for relocating practices will cease when onsite assessments recommence.

Relocation during COVID-19 pandemic response phase

If your practice relocated during the COVID-19 pandemic response phase, you are still required to complete and submit the relevant forms to us for processing.

Practices will be given an extension to the current 6 months to provide an accreditation certificate for their new location.



Practices must complete an Attestation Statement, which is submitted to the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) to be eligible for this extension.

More information on the flexible arrangements available during the pandemic is available on the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care website safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/primary-care/ and click on National Practice Accreditation Scheme.

Attestation Statement for practices that have relocated during COVID-19

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) oversees the administration of the National General Practice Accreditation (NGPA) Scheme. Under the NGPA Scheme, various measures have been introduced to increase the flexibility of accreditation requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic. The accreditation status of all general practices is on hold until further notice.

The Commission has facilitated the submission of an 'Attestation Statement' in-lieu of an accreditation certificate for practices that have relocated during COVID-19.

Any general practice relocating, must submit an attestation statement through the practice's accrediting agency as soon as practical, or within 3 months of onsite assessments recommencing.

A practice must provide Services Australia with evidence of accreditation together with the new address. Therefore, if relocating, it is the responsibility of the practice to undertake the following compliance steps:

1. inform its accrediting agency and Services Australia of its intention to relocate, and include details of the new location
 - once notified, Services Australia will place PIP & WIP payments on hold until a practice submits an accreditation certificate that includes the new practice address.

2. during the COVID-19 pandemic, while accreditation certificates and onsite assessments are on hold, relocating practices must submit a completed Attestation Statement to accreditation@safetyandquality.gov.au.

If these steps are not undertaken in the prescribed order, Services Australia may withhold PIP and WIP payments, which may also result in delays with applying for other programs where accreditation is required.

Go to safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/primary-care/ and click on National Practice Accreditation Scheme for news about accreditation during COVID-19.

Accreditation of practice branches

Additional practice branches that provide more than 3,000 Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) services per annum must:

- be accredited or registered for accreditation in their own right to be eligible to participate in the PIP and/or the WIP—Practice Stream
- achieve accreditation within 12 months after they reach 3,000 MBS services per annum.

It is the practice's responsibility to monitor its own MBS services. The number of MBS services for each additional practice branch is available on your payment advice.

Practice addresses

PIP and WIP—Practice Stream online validates all practice addresses to match Australia Post data. This may result in variances between what we have registered for your practice and the address you have advised.

Make sure your practice address on all documents matches the address we have registered for your practice.

Eligible Allied Health Professionals under the WIP—Practice Stream

The WIP—Practice Stream provides incentives to general practices in all locations to support the engagement of nurses, allied health professionals, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers and practitioners. Practices are encouraged to consider the needs of their community when determining which health professionals or combination of health professionals to engage.



Practices in all locations are now able to engage allied health professionals. There is no longer a restriction to engage allied health professionals in Urban Areas of Workforce Shortage.

Practices should provide each eligible health professional's (excluding GPs) name, profession, average weekly hours, and where available their unique identifier number (AHPRA or HPI-I) when claiming hours worked.

If you report your health professionals online, please make sure you enter the unique identifier with the correct number of characters:

- AHPRA—13 characters (no spaces)
- HPI-I—16 characters (no spaces).

Go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/practicestream to get more information about the WIP—Practice Stream and to access the guidelines to view a list of eligible allied health professionals.

Reminders

- We have received a number of IP003 forms where practices have been including their GPs in the Health Professional Details section of the form. GPs don't need to provide their hours and AHPRA or HPI-I numbers as health professionals for WIP—Practice Stream.
- Are you using the latest version of the form? You can go to servicessaustralia.gov.au/pip or servicessaustralia.gov.au/practicestream to download current forms.
- Make sure all declaration signatures and dates are completed and current before you submit your form. We won't accept forms with incomplete declarations.
- You must submit all pages of forms. We won't process forms if pages are missing.

Find out more

Go online to servicessaustralia.gov.au/pip and servicessaustralia.gov.au/practicestream

Email pip@servicessaustralia.gov.au or wippractice@servicessaustralia.gov.au

Call **1800 222 032*** (8.30 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday, Australian Central Standard Time)

*Call charges apply from mobile and pay phones only.

Please be aware that there may be risks with sending personal information through unsecured networks or email channels.

