



Medicare Support for People in Commonwealth-Declared COVID-19 Hot-Spots

Last updated: 16 July 2021

PLEASE NOTE: The new Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items are only available to general practitioners (GPs) and other medical practitioners (OMPs) working in a general practice setting.

Other Medical Practitioner includes specialist medical practitioners and consultant physicians working in a general practice setting in their capacity as an OMP.

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- From 16 July 2021, MBS items 92746 (for GPs) and 92747 (for OMPs) are available to practitioners providing telehealth services to people living in locations declared to be a COVID-19 hot-spot by the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer, for the duration of the hot-spot declaration.
 - The new items are also available to patients in other locations who are required to be in quarantine or in isolation under a public health order.
 - MBS items 92746 and 92747 enable medical practitioners to provide longer telephone consultations, lasting 20 minutes or more.
 - The new items are exempt from the requirement that the patient must have received a face-to-face consultation from the medical practitioner or the practice in the last twelve months.

Who can receive MBS items 92746 and 92747?

- MBS items 92746 and 92747 can be delivered to patients who are:
 - in a COVID-19 Commonwealth declared hotspot; or
 - in COVID-19 isolation because of a State or Territory public health order; or
 - in COVID-19 quarantine because of a State or Territory public health order.
- More information is available on the Department of Health's website at:
 - [Listing areas of COVID-19 local transmission as hotspots | Australian Government Department of Health](#) ; and
 - <https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>
- Information is also available from state and territory Health Department websites.



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Billing

- The fees for MBS items 92746 and 92747 are equivalent to a Level C consultation undertaken by a GP or OMP.
- Note: Due to time constraints, it has not been possible to amend the legislation that establishes 100% rebates for GP and OMP services. The rebate for these items is therefore paid at 85% of the item fee. The fee amount has been increased so that the Medicare rebate paid for this service is at the same level as the equivalent rebate for a Level C consultation undertaken by a GP or OMP.

Item restrictions

- For patients who are not in COVID-19 isolation or COVID-19 quarantine, MBS items 92746 and 92747 are only available for the duration of a COVID-19 hot-spot declaration.
- Standard MBS multiple same-day attendance rules apply to the new items.
- Medicare benefits may be paid for more than one attendance on a patient on the same day by the same medical practitioner, provided the subsequent attendances are not a continuation of the initial or earlier attendances.
- Note: there should be a reasonable lapse of time between the attendances before they can be regarded as separate attendances.

Where can I find more information?

- The full item descriptor(s) and information on other changes to the MBS can be found on the MBS Online website at www.mbsonline.gov.au. You can also subscribe to future MBS updates by visiting [MBS Online](#) and clicking 'Subscribe'.
- The Department of Health provides an email service for providers seeking advice on interpretation of the MBS items and rules, the *Health Insurance Act 1973* and associated regulations. If you have a query relating exclusively to interpretation of the Schedule, you should email askMBS@health.gov.au.
- In addition, you can subscribe to '[News for Health Professionals](#)' on the Services Australia website to receive regular news highlights.
- If you are seeking advice in relation to Medicare billing, claiming, payments, or obtaining a provider number, please go to the Health Professionals page on the Services Australia website or contact the Services Australia on the Provider Enquiry Line – 13 21 50.



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Table 1: COVID-19 impacted area telephone services introduced on 16 July 2021

Service	Telephone items
GP consultation, 20 minutes or longer	92746
OMP consultation, 20 minutes or longer	92747

Please note that the information provided is a general guide only. It is ultimately the responsibility of treating practitioners to use their professional judgment to determine the most clinically appropriate services to provide, and then to ensure that any services billed to Medicare fully meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the legislation.

This sheet is current as of the Last updated date shown above, and does not account for MBS changes since that date.