



Cessation of the temporary Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items for nuclear medicine factsheet

Last updated: 07/01/2020

What are the changes?

From 20 December 2019, the temporary nuclear medicine items (61311, 61332, 61333, 61336, 61337, 61341 and 61344) that became available from 14 September 2019 will cease following the full resumption of nuclear medicine production at the Lucas Heights facility of the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO). Supplies of technetium have returned to normal levels and requestors and providers of diagnostic imaging items must revert to using the technetium-based nuclear medicine imaging items set out in the *Health Insurance (Diagnostic Imaging Services Table) Regulations 2019*. Medicare rebates will no longer be paid for any temporary item, including the temporary attenuation correction item, performed after 20 December 2019.

Why are the changes being made?

Commencing the week beginning 25 November 2019, ANSTO resumed full domestic production of molybdenum, the parent isotope for technetium. Given the stabilisation in the full supply of technetium, there is no longer a need to allow the use of the temporary items that relied on alternative equipment and/or alternative radiopharmaceuticals. ANSTO has kept customers and the nuclear medicine profession regularly informed about the availability of technetium.

What does this mean for requestors?

Where clinically indicated, requestors should continue to request the current nuclear medicine imaging items that require technetium. Both general practitioners and medical specialists are eligible to request the current non-positron emission tomography nuclear medicine imaging items, set out in the *Health Insurance (Diagnostic Imaging Services Table) Regulations 2019*.

What does this mean for providers?

On receipt of a valid request, providers who are eligible to provide these services may render the current technetium based nuclear medicine items in the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS). Providers must cease using the temporary items to provide nuclear medicine imaging services.

How will these changes affect patients?

Patients will continue to have access to the nuclear medicine imaging scans that are listed on the Medicare Benefits Schedule.



Where can I find more information?

The temporary nuclear medicine items may re-commence in the event of a future national shortage of technetium. Announcements will be published on the Department of Health's *Nuclear Medicine and Positron Emission Tomography (PET)* webpage.

The nuclear medicine imaging items currently available for use are those set out in the *Health Insurance (Diagnostic Imaging Services Table) Regulations 2019* which can be downloaded from the [Federal Register of Legislation website](#).

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.