

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND AGEING – FACT SHEET

NEW MBS ‘TRANSITIONAL HOURS’ ITEMS 603 & 696

Two new Medicare items were introduced on 1 November 2008 to give doctors access to higher rebates for providing urgent out-of-surgery attendances to their patients out of normal working hours but before the start of the time period known as ‘after hours’.

The items may be provided during the newly-created MBS ‘transitional hours’ timezone. Transitional hours are between 6pm and 8pm on weekdays and between midday and 1pm on Saturdays.

The items are only for use where the patient has a medical condition requiring urgent out-of-surgery medical treatment within the transitional hours period and treatment cannot be delayed till the next in-hours period.

GPs may provide item 603, *General Practitioner Urgent Attendances – Transitional Hours*, for a 1 November 2008 benefit of \$83.50 (100% Medicare).

Other medical practitioners may provide item 696, *Other Non-Referred Urgent Attendances – Transitional Hours*, for a 1 November 2008 benefit of \$67.00 (100% Medicare).

The new items allow for bookings to be taken between 4-8pm for services provided between 6-8pm on weekdays, and between 10am-1pm for services provided between midday and 1pm Saturdays.

The table below provides examples of how the new item may be claimed.

<i>Time booking taken</i>	<i>Time of attendance</i>	<i>Relevant item</i>	<i>Reason</i>
5pm (weekday)	6.30pm	603 or 696	Booking taken within 4-8pm booking period; service provided within transitional hours
6.30pm (weekday)	7.30pm	603 or 696	Booking taken within the booking period; service provided within transitional hours
5.30pm (weekday)	9pm	Relevant non-urgent, out-of-surgery after hours item (A22 or A23 group)	Booking taken within the booking period; service provided after end of transitional hours
12.15pm (Saturday)	12.30pm	603 or 696	Booking taken outside of 10am-midday booking period but within transitional hours; service provided within transitional hours
11.45am (Saturday)	1.30pm	Relevant non-urgent, out-of-surgery after hours item (A22 or A23 group)	Booking taken within 10am-midday booking period; service provided after end of transitional hours

For the second or more patients seen on the same occasion during transitional hours, the relevant in-hours out-of-surgery item should be itemised.

For more information, go to www.mbsonline.gov.au or call Medicare Australia on 132 150.