

Medicare programs to improve access to mental health services
Better access to GPs, psychologists and other mental health professionals

Total cost: \$538 m / 5 years

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-2011
Est Costs	\$50.7m	\$92.0m	\$108.6m	\$130.2m	\$156.1m

The stated aims of this initiative were to reform the MBS to:

- .Encourage more GPs to participate in early intervention, assessment and management of people with mental illness.
- Increase access to appropriately trained psychologists and allied health professionals on referral from a GP.
- Encourage private psychiatrists to see more new patients and refer patients on to psychologists and GPs
- Provide training to the primary care workforce to help improve recognition and treatment of mental illness.

Medicare Benefits Schedule is at

[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/4F3760E8629F6E21CA25736A0025C58C/\\$File/November%202007%20Complete%20MBS%20less%203%20items.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/4F3760E8629F6E21CA25736A0025C58C/$File/November%202007%20Complete%20MBS%20less%203%20items.pdf)

Explanatory notes at the front of the schedule (A.40 and M.6) set out the criteria for use of the relevant Medicare items.

The schedule also provides a description of each item, the Medicare fee, and the Medicare rebate that is payable. These are easily found using the search function.

Medicare item 2710	GP mental health care plan	MBS rebate = \$153.30
Medicare item 2712	GP mental health care plan review	MBS rebate = \$102.20
Medicare item 2713	GP mental health consultation	MBS rebate = \$67.45
Medicare items 2721-2727	GP focused psychological strategies	MBS rebate = \$82.10 - \$117.50
Medicare items 8000-80020	Clinical psychology services	MBS rebate = \$76.65 - \$286.00
Medicare items 80100-80120	General psychologists	MBS rebate = \$54.30 - \$195.50
Medicare items 80125-80145	Occupational therapy services	MBS rebate = \$47.85 - \$172.20
Medicare items 80150-80170	Social worker services	MBS rebate = \$47.85 - \$172.20

Medicare data are at

<http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/medicare/mbs.shtml>

By entering each Medicare item, it is possible to access the number of services and the cost of these services to Medicare by time period, state, and age group and sex of patients.

Some information about bulk billing and out-of-pocket costs can be accessed at at DoHA website (although this is still being updated) at

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/medstat-dec07-analysis-b>

The Minister for Health has recently released data about the Better Access program which is at

[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/mentalhealth/publishing.nsf/Content/better-access-through-mbs-1/\\$FILE/UTILISATION%20OF%20MENTAL%20HEALTH%20ITEMS%20-%20April%202008.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/mentalhealth/publishing.nsf/Content/better-access-through-mbs-1/$FILE/UTILISATION%20OF%20MENTAL%20HEALTH%20ITEMS%20-%20April%202008.pdf)

This is essentially the same data as that attached, but does not include services provided by occupational therapists and social workers, and is over the 14 month period 1 November 2006 – 30 December 2007. It does include a breakdown of services by RRMA and also the rate of bulk billing and the out-of-pocket costs for services that are not bulk billed.

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2007 data – services and cost

Item	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total services	Cost (\$m)
2710	32,822	39,891	44,197	32,965	48,047	37,972	37,381	42,091	38,312	40,047	42,173	33,908	469,804	70.7
2712	2,433	3,3919	6,117	6,057	10,340	9,099	10,780	12,260	11,675	13,016	13,140	11,796	110,626	11.1
2713	21,332	26,616	32,015	27,074	39,705	34,186	36,349	40,612	30,559	42,146	44,100	38,947	422,641	28.1
2721-2727	2,585	2,789	3,348	2,548	3,232	2,782	3,316	3,244	3,046	3,325	3,093	2,766	36,094	3.7
80000-80020	11,677	20,679	32,138	30,685	44,055	42,519	43,939	50,380	47,134	49,895	56,217	48,071	477,389	53.7
80100-80120	30,344	47,740	67,426	61,928	88,675	84,576	88,289	97,122	92,049	100,194	106,531	95,428	960,302	74.9
80125-80145	105	239	343	424	688	664	726	1,079	1,144	1,170	1,423	1,296	9,301	0.7
80150-80170	877	1,588	2,679	2,490	3,927	3,863	4,240	5,119	5,161	5,741	6,634	5,962	48,304	3.4
Total													2,534,461	246.3

**Medicare programs to improve access to mental health services
Out-patient psychiatric services**

2005-2007

		CY 2005	CY 2006	CY 2007
Items 291, 293 Management plans	services	841	3,161	9,417
	cost	\$0.16m	\$0.71m	\$3.10m
Items 300-319 Consultations	services	1,698,709	1,685,613	1,565,966
	cost	\$195.58m	\$197,38m	\$194.57m
Items 353 – 361 Telepsychiatry	services	242	480	891
	cost	\$0.03m	\$0.05m	\$0.09m

ANALYSIS OF USE OF MEDICARE MENTAL HEALTH ITEMS BY AGE AND SEX IN 2007

Medicare service	Age groups										Total services
	0-4	5-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	
GP m h plans & review (F)	849	13,324	60,373	85,157	89,890	69,469	39,772	14,361	5,723	1,166	
GP m h plans & review (M)	1,594	16,787	27,693	42,522	46,341	35,582	20,041	6,824	2,726	336	
											580,430
GP m h consult (F)	103	2,894	37,528	55,625	64,717	54,889	33,335	14,860	7,177	1,373	
GP m h consult (M)	152	2,576	17,586	32,943	38,142	30,107	18,079	7,040	3,130	385	
											422,641
GP psych strategies (F)	8	226	2,752	4,487	5,656	5,064	3,264	1,290	615	50	
GP psych strategies (M)	15	192	1,420	2,725	3,277	2,443	1,619	615	293	47	
											36,094
Clin Psych (F)	905	14,953	48,773	74,888	77,956	58,294	31,817	8,640	2,390	314	
Clin Psych (M)	1,946	22,019	21,368	29,850	35,447	27,777	15,084	3,744	1,143	80	
											477,389

Gen Psych (F)	1,403	26,538	90,026	145,738	161,170	125,389	69,415	20,106	6,043	720	
Gen Psych (M)	2,607	39,564	37,854	60,307	72,203	57,969	31,978	8,566	2,509	203	
											960,302
Social Workers (F)	122	1,626	4,375	7,704	9,841	6,827	3,494	991	432	98	
Social Workers (M)	152	1,442	1,709	2,369	3,171	2,446	1,222	325	116	9	
											48,301
Occ Ther (M)	145	433	708	883	1,109	953	444	168	66	10	
Occ Ther (F)	832	1,826	312	267	446	378	206	68	27	0	
											9,301
Total services (F)	3,535	59,994	244,535	374,482	410,339	320,885	181,441	60,416	22,446	3,731	
Total service (M)	7,298	54,406	107,942	170,983	199,027	156,702	88,229	27,182	9,944	988	
											2,534,461
% of population	19.4%		42.8%			24.5%		13.1%			(1.6%)