

Medicare Items for Children with Autism or Any Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD)

Medicare items have been introduced for:

- Consultant physicians (paediatricians and psychiatrists) to diagnose and develop a treatment plan for children aged under 13 years on referral from a GP
- Psychologists, speech pathologists and occupational therapists to provide up to four services in total per child to collaborate with the psychiatrist or paediatrician on the assessment where required; and
- Psychologists, speech pathologists and occupational therapists to provide early intervention treatment following diagnosis (providing up to 20 service in total per child)

These items commenced as of the 1st of July 2008.

Your child has access to these items up to the day of their 13th birthday for diagnosis, and up to their 15th birthday for treatment.

The Allied Health Medicare Items

There are 3 allied health items for collaboration with diagnosis and/or contribution to a paediatrician or psychiatrist's treatment plan, i.e. the paediatrician or psychiatrist will need to refer you to psychology, speech pathology or occupational therapy.

These items are a once off and can not be accessed again. They are also only accessible through private practices; you cannot access them through any public or community health practitioners. A Child Development Unit cannot refer you either; it must be a private paediatrician or psychiatrist.

It does not matter when your children received their diagnosis; even if it was 2 years ago you can still access these new Medicare Items.

The Medicare item numbers the Paediatrician or Psychiatrist will need to use for this initial collaboration are:

- **Psychology: MBS item 82000**
- **Speech Pathology: MBS item 82005**
- **Occupational Therapy: MBS item 82010**

You must make sure that:

- the paediatrician or psychiatrist is registered with Medicare Australia as meeting the credentialing requirements for the provision of these services
- the child is not an admitted patient of an hospital
- the service is provided to the child individually and in person i.e. the child must be present at all times, even if the appointment is to just fill in paperwork or to discuss diagnosis/treatment
- the service lasts at least 50 minutes in duration

Rebates for the New Medicare Items

Psychology 82000	Fee: \$90.15	Benefit: 85% = \$76.65
Speech Pathology 82005	Fee: \$79.40	Benefit: 85% = \$67.50
Occupational Therapy 82010	Fee: \$79.40	Benefit: 85% = \$67.50

These items are limited to a maximum of four services in total per child consisting of any combination of 82000, 82005 and 82010, provided by any combination of allied health professionals.

Medicare Item Numbers for Treatment of Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD)/Autism

- **Psychology: MBS item 82015**
- **Speech Pathology: MBS item 82020**
- **Occupational Therapy: MBS item 82025**

The treatment plan consists of up to 20 services, in total; these services are not per year. They do not affect the Enhanced Primary Care plan or the Better Mental Health Plan which you will still have access to. They are both completely separate to these new Medicare items.

You must make sure that:

- the paediatrician or psychiatrist is registered with Medicare Australia as meeting the credentialing requirements for the provision of these services
- the child is not an admitted patient of an hospital
- the service is provided to the child individually and in person i.e. the child must be present at all times, even if the appointment is to just fill in paperwork or to discuss diagnosis/treatment
- the service lasts at least 30 minutes in duration

Rebates for the New Medicare Items

Psychology 82015	Fee: \$90.15	Benefit: 85% = \$76.65
Speech Pathology 82020	Fee: \$79.40	Benefit: 85% = \$67.50
Occupational Therapy 82025	Fee: \$79.40	Benefit: 85% = \$67.50

Allied Health Professionals can call Medicare Australia on 132 150 to check this information

Parents and carers can seek clarification by calling 132 011

Private Health Insurance

If you have private health insurance you will need to decide if you will use Medicare or your private health insurance to pay for these services. You cannot use your private health insurance to “top up” the Medicare rebate paid for the services.

The next page is for you to give to your consultant physician (GP), paediatrician, psychiatrists or allied health professional if they do not know of the new items or how the referrals need to be made. Remember that Allied Health Professionals can call Medicare Australia on 132 150 to check this information

New Medicare Consultant Physician Items for Autism or any other Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) starting 1 July 2008

Two items will be available to assess, diagnose and develop treatment and management plans for children with autism or any other PDD. Both items attract a Schedule fee of \$238.30 and Medicare benefit (85%) of \$202.60

- Consultant paediatricians: MBS item 135
- Consultant psychiatrists: MBS item 289

The new items are available to treat children under 13 years of age with autism or any other pervasive developmental disorder, such as Rhetts disorder, Asperger's syndrome or childhood disintegrative disorder. Consultant psychiatrists and paediatricians will also be able to refer children to eligible psychologists, speech pathologists and occupational therapists for assistance with diagnosis or contribution to a treatment plan, and early intervention treatment.

More detailed information on PDD items is available at www.health.gov.au/autism

Referred Patient Treatment and Management Plan Guidelines.

It is advisable before using item 135 or 289 that practitioners familiarise themselves with the "Guidelines for the assessment of autistic spectrum disorders in Australia" Practitioners can access the guidelines online at:

<http://www.med.monash.edu.au/spppm/research/devpsych/actnow/factsheet15.html>

Referral Requirements (Psychiatrists or Paediatricians to Allied Health Professionals)

Referrals from consultant psychiatrists and paediatricians to allied health professionals for the PDD assessment items must be made from eligible Medicare services.

An eligible allied health professional can provide PDD assessment items (82000-820101) to a child where:

- the child has previously been provided with any MBS service covering items 110 through 131 inclusive, as provided by an eligible consultant paediatrician; or
- the child has previously been provided with any MBS service covering items 296 through 370 (excepting item 359) inclusive, as provided by an eligible consultant psychiatrist

An eligible allied health professional can provide PDD treatment items (82015-82025) to a child where:

- the child has previously been provided with a PDD treatment plan (MBS item 135) by an eligible consultant paediatrician; or
- the child has previously been provided with a PDD treatment plan (MBS item 289) by an eligible consultant psychiatrist

An allied health professional wanting to provide any of the items 82000-82025 must be in receipt of a current referral provided by a consultant physician paediatrician or a consultant psychiatrist. With specific regard to the treatment items, a patient must have a previous claim for item 135 or 289.

Referring consultant paediatricians and consultant psychiatrists are **not** required to use a specific form to refer patients for these services. The referral may be a letter or note to an eligible allied health professional signed and dated by the referring practitioner. The allied health professional must be in receipt of the referral at the initial consultation. Allied health professionals are required to retain the referral for 24 months from the date the service was rendered for Medicare Australia auditing purposes

Referral Validity

Medicare benefits are available for up to four allied health PDD assessments and up to twenty allied health PDD treatment services per patient

Patients will require a separate referral for each allied health professional they receive service from and will also need fresh referrals for each new course of treatment provided to them.

For further information about the Medicare Benefits Schedule items, please go to the Department of Health and Ageing's website <http://www.health.gov.au/mbsonline>