



Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care

Dr Gerry Adams
Dean
Faculty of Radiation Oncology
Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists
via: melissa.doyle@ranzcr.edu.au

Implementation of the new Medicare Benefits Schedule for radiation oncology

Dear Dr Adams

On 1 July 2024, the Medicare Benefits Schedule for radiation oncology will be updated with a simplified, modernised set of items. The new items were developed via the Medicare Review Taskforce process which included an Oncology Committee¹ and Implementation Liaison Group. The process resulted in a cost-neutral restructure of the radiation oncology schedule, with fees weighted to better match service complexity.

Please find a copy of the new schedule of MBS items attached. The items have been indexed to the current financial year 2023-24 and will continue to be indexed annually, in line with routine MBS indexation policy.

Thank you for collaborating with the department to implement the new schedule. The implementation process will include direct engagement and communication with stakeholders, the release of educational materials, and structured question and answer support. Educational materials will include videos and quick reference guides on how to use the new schedule.

Please note that on 1 July 2024 the current schedule of items will be entirely replaced by the new schedule. There is no mechanism to 'phase-out' old items while 'phasing-in' new items, nor make current items available alongside or in conjunction with the new items. Specific educational material will be provided to manage the transition from old to new schedules, including claiming guidance for patients whose courses of treatment commence and complete either side of the transition.

¹ The Report of the MBS Review Oncology Committee is available via the following link:
<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/taskforce-endorsed-report-oncology-clinical-committee?language=en>

To assist with implementation of a new MBS schedule, the department ordinarily releases mapping materials to help explain how each of the old items maps to new items. Although the new schedule for radiation oncology is simplified (which we hope will make claiming under Medicare easier), it is a wholesale restructure which does not map to the old schedule. The faculty and the department have agreed that a mapping document is likely to be confusing and would carry a high risk of error including, for example, to the updating of radiation oncology clinical information systems.

Following implementation of the new schedule, the department will conduct routine post-implementation monitoring to assess the impact of the changes on the sector.

I welcome any feedback you may have on the implementation of the new Medicare schedule for radiation oncology. Please direct any queries to the radiation oncology team at the department via email MBSOncology@health.gov.au. Please do not direct queries on implementation of the new schedule to AskMBS.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Wilcox". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Nick Wilcox
Director, Radiation Therapy Section
MBS Policy and Specialist Services Branch
Medical Benefits Division

5 March 2024