



MODERNISING AND SUPPORTING HIGH VALUE CARE CARDIAC SURGICAL SERVICES

The Australian Government is making changes to modernise Medicare-funded cardiac surgical services to ensure they reflect current medical practice, support high-value care, and ensure patients receive procedures in line with current best practice. These changes follow recommendations from the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) Review Taskforce.

What are the changes?

On 1 July 2021, the Government will make a range of changes to cardiac surgical services to update item descriptors, combine similar surgical procedures, introduce items that represent a complete medical service, incentivise advanced techniques, remove procedures that no longer represent best practice, and reduce low value invasive angiography and ineffective coronary artery stenting.

These changes build on cardiac imaging service changes introduced on 1 August 2020, and the 15 September 2020 amendments which introduced a new ambulatory electrocardiogram monitoring item and created five new Myocardial Perfusion Studies items to ensure timely access to cardiac services in rural and remote areas.

With the Government's response to the recommendations from the MBS Review Taskforce regarding cardiac service now complete, the Department will monitor the impact of ECG changes and review in coming months.

Why are these changes being made?

The changes are the outcome of Government agreement to recommendations from the independent MBS Review Taskforce, following a comprehensive review of the cardiac services MBS items by clinicians, health system experts and consumers.

The changes support evidence based best practice, reflect contemporary practice and have been agreed following extensive consultation and discussions with key stakeholders.

What does this mean for patients?

Patients will benefit from access to more high-value cardiac investigations and interventions, with the changes incentivising best practice and providing improved long-term cardiac health.

What does this mean for providers?

These changes support contemporary best practice for providers and will simplify their billing arrangements.

More detail will be provided to the profession in due course.

Further detail will be available on
www.mbsonline.gov.au