



Psychology Referrals

MBS Better Access vs COVID items & New session count requirements

Medicare and the Australian Clinical Psychology Association have recently issued updated advice stating the number of sessions that are authorised by a GP MHTP must be explicitly stated from 1 Jan 2021 and if the session count is omitted we must seek clarification from the GP for anything beyond the first session. Separately, we have also been approached by a number of General Practitioners, whose patients were under a GP Mental Health Treatment Plan (MHTP) in 2020, who have expressed confusion as to the timing and what items are needed for referrals in 2021, to ensure continuity of care for their patients. In short, we can't accept referrals under the additional COVID items until all 10 Better Access sessions have been exhausted. For new patients refer as usual under the 2700, 2701, 2715 or 2717 items, for existing patients, regardless whether they received sessions under the additional 10 COVID items in 2020, their first review in 2021 should be under the 2712 or 2713 MHTP review items. In either case the number of authorised sessions must now be explicitly stated and not more than 6 sessions. Once a patient has exhausted the Better Access sessions in 2021 they can be referred using a standard consult item for the additional 10 COVID sessions and the psychologist will ensure that any COVID sessions that wrapped from 2020 into the start of 2021 will count towards the 20 session limit pa.

2020

MHTP (2700, 2701, 2715 or 2717)
NB: 6 Sessions

1 2 3 4 5 6

MHTP Review (2712, 2713 or Stnd Consult item)
NB: 6 Sessions

7 8 9 10 x x

Standard consult
Referral: Additional 10 Covid Sx

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

In this example the patient does not happen to use the full 20 sessions possible in the calendar year

2021

9 10

MHTP Review (2712, 2713 or Stnd Consult item)
NB: 6 Sessions

1 2 3 4 5 6

MHTP Review (2712, 2713 or Stnd Consult item)
NB: 6 Sessions

7 8 9 10 x x

Standard consult
Referral: Additional 10 Covid Sx

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 x x