



Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program update January 2009



Guide to completing claim forms—session information

Medicare Australia has recently been asked by organisations and nurses about the session information requirements on the *Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program claim* form, so that monthly incentive claims are not rejected. To help you complete this form, we have identified and explained some of the most common enquiries we receive.

Leaving session information blank

If the section on the Medicare Australia *Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program claim* form relating to session information is left blank, Medicare Australia cannot pay for the session.

One reason for leaving the session information blank could be that no patient contact was made. However, claims can be paid where a nurse has performed patient related tasks during a session. For example, the nurse may review plans or make telephone contact with the treating general practitioner (GP) or psychiatrist, but has not conducted a face-to-face or telephone session with the patient. In such circumstances, the nurse should complete the session details and maintain appropriate records of patient related activities accordingly (for example, made three telephone calls and meeting with GP).

Three and a half hour sessions

Three and a half hour sessions consist of two individual services to patients. For example, you may combine two of the following services:

- face-to-face contact with a patient
- writing clinic notes
- telephone contact with a patient, or where reasonable, a member of the patient's family
- discussing the patient with the treating GP or psychiatrist
- reviewing a patient's health care plan/clinic notes.

Travel

Where a nurse is required to travel to conduct a session or perform patient related activities under the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program, the travel can be included as part of a session. For audit purposes, it is important that you keep a log of all travel, including the date, time and distance travelled. If you travel by taxi, make sure you keep receipts.

Change to Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program

New fax number

Please note the fax number for Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program has changed to **08 8464 9886**. Please make sure this number is used when submitting claims or applications.

Forms to capture shared employment arrangements

As announced in April 2008 by the Hon Nicola Roxon MP, Minister for Health and Ageing, shared employment arrangements under the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program allow for mental health nursing resources to be shared between state and territory health organisations and participating practices.

To support these new arrangements, Medicare Australia has updated the *Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program claim* form so nurses and organisations can inform us when a mental health nurse service has been made available by state and territory health organisations. The *Program Guidelines* have also been amended to reflect shared employment arrangements.

The updated *Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program claim* form and the Program Guidelines are available at www.medicareaustralia.gov.au > For health professionals > Incentives and allowances > Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program

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Record keeping

Organisations participating in the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program are required to maintain appropriate records in accordance with Sections 7, 9 and 10 of the *Program Guidelines*.

Medicare Australia may also request to see your records to confirm you are eligible to continue participating in the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program. You should make sure you maintain the following records:

- documents detailing appropriate insurance coverage for Workers' Compensation, vicarious liability, public liability and professional indemnity
- patient reminder and recall systems
- GP mental health care plans or equivalent for psychiatrists
- clear and specified lines of clinical accountability in writing
- records relating to mental health nurse engagement
- mental health nurse case records detailing activities undertaken.

New credential date reminder

Mental health nurses participating in the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program are required to be credentialed by the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses by 31 December 2009.

Nurses working under the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program must make sure they have sufficient time to obtain the credential from the college.

Nurses currently participating in the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program, or those who will start participating in 2009, are encouraged to contact the college on **1300 667 079*** to discuss application requirements.

Change in organisation details

Organisations need to advise Medicare Australia when changes are made to business, banking or address details held by Medicare Australia for the purposes of participating in the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program.

The authorised contact person is responsible for notifying Medicare Australia of any changes to organisation arrangements, and these must be made in writing. This is particularly important when completing the *Mental Health*

Nurse Incentive Program claim form as the organisation's contact person must sign the declaration. These details are verified before processing incentive claims.

Where the contact person has not signed the declaration or the information on the form is different to Medicare Australia's records, then claims cannot be paid. In such cases, Medicare Australia will endeavour to rectify this by contacting the relevant organisations, however if this is not possible, then the claim will be returned without payment.

Program hints and tips

Did you know that you only need one organisation identification number when participating in the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program? You do not need to apply for another organisation identification number for different locations that you may practise at. Organisation identification numbers are allocated to organisations when they are accepted to participate in the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program—they are applicable to **all** locations used by the organisation under this initiative.

MHNIP update correspondence:

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Access MHNIP forms:
**www.medicareaustralia.gov.au
then go to For health professionals >
Incentives & allowances >
Mental health nurse incentive program**

Telephone enquiries

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