



PIP News Update

November 2008

New PIP GP Aged Care Access Incentive

From February 2009, GPs from PIP practices who are providing services in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF) will be eligible for incentive payments through the PIP GP Aged Care Access Initiative. Eligible GPs can access payments of up to \$2500 in a financial year. A payment of \$1000 is paid to GPs who provide 60 MBS services. An additional \$1500 is paid to GPs who provide 140 MBS services in RACFs.

More information is available from the PIP enquiry line on **1800 222 032*** or from the Aged Care Access Initiative Program Guidelines on the Department of Health and Ageing website www.health.gov.au > **Programs & Campaigns > Programs & Initiatives > Aged Care Access Initiative**

PIP e-Health Incentive

A new e-Health incentive will be introduced from August 2009, which will replace the PIP Information Management/Information Technology (IM/IT) Incentive. Medicare Australia will be writing to practices in early 2009 to advise of the eligibility requirements. The payment for the e-Health incentive will be retrospective. Practices will need to meet the requirements by 30 April 2009 and continue to meet them throughout May, June and July to qualify for the first payment in August 2009.

The new PIP e-Health Incentive will have a payment level of \$6.50 per Standardised Whole Patient Equivalent (SWPE). The payments per practice will be capped at \$12 500 per quarter.

The last quarterly payment for the PIP IM/IT Incentive will be made in May 2009.

PIP Urban Practice Nurse Incentive

The Urban Practice Nurse Incentive supports practices to employ practice nurses, Aboriginal health workers and certain allied health professional groups.

The allied health professional groups include:

- audiologists
- dieticians/nutritionists
- occupational therapists
- orthoptists
- orthotists/prosthetists
- physiotherapists
- podiatrists
- psychologists
- social workers
- speech pathologists.

Practices employing or retaining chiropractors, diabetes educators, exercise physiologists and osteopaths can also access support through the PIP Urban Practice Nurse Incentive.

If your practice currently employs an allied health professional and is not registered for the Urban Practice Nurse Incentive please contact the PIP enquiry line on **1800 222 032*** for further information.

Practice branch accreditation

In November 2008, Medicare Australia will be writing to practices to confirm the accreditation status of practice branches.

Practice branches providing 3000 or more services each year need to be registered for accreditation in their own right, in order for their services to be included in the quarterly calculations for PIP payments. Services will not be counted in the quarterly calculations for practice branches that provide 3000 or more services each year, if they are not registered or accredited.

Medicare Australia would like to remind you that practice branches providing less than 3000 services each year do not need to be accredited in their own right. Their services will be automatically included in the calculation of the main practice's PIP payments.

Please check page 4 of your practice statement to see the number of services performed at each location.

Practice ownership

If a practice changes ownership it can affect the eligibility for PIP payments.

If the practice location does not change and the practice's full accreditation status is included in the transfer of practice ownership, the new owner may be eligible for PIP payments based on the practice's historical Standardised Whole Patient Equivalent (SWPE) value.

A practice's historical SWPE value cannot generally be transferred if:

- there is a change in practice location
 - full accreditation is not included in the transfer of practice ownership
 - the practice was withdrawn from the PIP at the time ownership was transferred
 - the practice was registered for accreditation at the time ownership was transferred
- or
- the practice closes and a new practice opens at the same location.

Where the historical SWPE value is not transferred, new practices will need to establish their own historical SWPE value. This means that these practices will not initially be eligible for PIP payments that are based on the SWPE values. However, practices may be eligible for payments that are not based on SWPE values, for example procedural and teaching payments.

Held payments

Payments to practices can sometimes be withheld by Medicare Australia for a number of reasons such as:

- non compliance
- change of practice ownership
- expiry of accreditation status
- incomplete or inaccurate practice details.

If the reason for the withheld payment relates to PIP eligibility, all PIP payments will be withheld. If the reason relates to a specific incentive, only the payments for the relevant incentive/s will be withheld.

Medicare Australia will contact practices to let them know if their payments are withheld and discuss any necessary action the practice needs to take to resolve the issue. The payments will be released once the matter has been resolved.

If practices have been ineligible for payment/s on three consecutive points-in-time and payments have been withheld, then the practice will:

- be removed from the PIP if the withheld payments relate to the practice's eligibility to participate in the PIP
- or
- be removed from the relevant PIP incentive/s if the withheld payment relates to the practice's eligibility for a particular PIP incentive/s.

Practices wishing to re-join the PIP or a specific PIP incentive will need to complete a new application form. Sign on payments will not be made to practices that have previously been paid a sign on payment.

Are your PIP practice details up to date?

It is important that Medicare Australia holds accurate information on all practices in the PIP. You should contact Medicare Australia within 14 days if there are any changes with your medical staff or practice activity. If this is not done your payment may be affected, or your practice's continuing eligibility for the PIP may be affected.

You should contact Medicare Australia when:

- a new doctor starts working at your practice—new doctors must complete the *Part G-Additional or new practitioner details* form included in the information package and send it to Medicare Australia with evidence of professional indemnity
- a doctor leaves your practice—please advise Medicare Australia of the date the doctor ceased at the practice
- your practice has a new PIP authorised contact person
- The practice's arrangements, including ownership and banking details, have changed.

How do I check my details?

You can check the practice details listed on your quarterly payment statements. The statement is based on the information you have supplied and shows the practice banking details, the provider numbers used for your payment calculation and the tiers of payment for which your practice has qualified, based on the information you have supplied.

How do I update my PIP practice details?

PIP information changes can be sent to:

Mail **Practice Incentives Program**
GPO Box 2572
Adelaide SA 5001

Fax **08 8274 9352**

All changes should be provided on practice letterhead, signed by the nominated contact person and witnessed by another person registered with the practice.

For more information about PIP:

online **www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/pip**

email **pip@medicareaustralia.gov.au**

call **1800 222 032***

write **Practice Incentives Program**
PO Box 2572
Adelaide SA 5001

* Call Charges apply from mobile and pay phones only.