



Australian Government

Medicare Australia

Practice Incentives Program

Domestic Violence Incentive Guidelines – September 2010

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Introduction

The Practice Incentives Program (PIP) aims to encourage continuing improvements in general practice through financial incentives to support quality care, and improve access and health outcomes for patients. To be eligible to participate in the PIP, a practice must be accredited, or registered for accreditation, against the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) *Standards for general practices*. Practices must achieve full accreditation within 12 months of joining the PIP and maintain full accreditation thereafter.

Payments are made through the PIP:

- to encourage use of electronic health systems
- to ensure patients have access to after hours care
- to support rural practices
- to encourage rural general practitioners (GPs) to provide procedural services
- to support practices to employ practice nurses
- to encourage practices to teach medical students
- for participating in educational activities to improve prescribing behaviour
- to encourage cervical screening
- for best practice management of patients with asthma and diabetes
- to encourage general practices in rural and remote areas to act as a referral point for women experiencing domestic violence
- to encourage GPs to provide increased and continuing services in Commonwealth-funded Residential Aged Care Facilities
- to support best practice management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients with chronic disease.

The PIP is administered by Medicare Australia on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

Definition of a GP

For the purposes of the PIP, GPs include general practitioners and/or non-specialist medical practitioners, known as other medical practitioners, who provide non-referred services and are not GPs. General practitioners include Fellows of the RACGP and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), vocationally registered general practitioners and medical practitioners undertaking approved training.

The Practice Incentives Program Domestic Violence Incentive

The PIP Domestic Violence Incentive aims to encourage general practices in rural and remote areas to act as a referral point for women experiencing domestic violence.

What are the Practice Incentives Program Domestic Violence Incentive payments and requirements?

The PIP Domestic Violence Incentive payments are calculated at \$1.00 per Standardised Whole Patient Equivalent (SWPE) per year. Payments are capped at \$4000 per year. Payments are made by Medicare Australia to eligible practices as part of each quarterly PIP payment.

The practice must employ practice nurses and/or Aboriginal health workers who must meet the minimum qualification and education requirements, as described below:

- Registered and enrolled nurses must hold current registration with the relevant registration board in the State or Territory of the practice, and:
 - be certified by Lifeline Australia as having completed recognised domestic violence training
 - be currently employed by the practice for the minimum number of sessions per week.

Professional nursing standards require that an enrolled nurse must be supervised by a registered nurse. Supervision may be direct or indirect, but appropriate supervisory arrangements must be in place.

- Aboriginal health workers must hold a Certificate Level III or above in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health from a recognised institute and:
 - be certified by Lifeline Australia as having completed recognised domestic violence training
 - be currently employed by the practice for the minimum number of sessions per week.

To obtain a comprehensive list of approved courses and training for Aboriginal health workers, email PIP@medicareaustralia.gov.au or call the PIP on **1800 222 032** (call charges may apply).

Is our practice eligible for the Practice Incentives Program Domestic Violence Incentive?

To be eligible for the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive, the main practice must:

- participate in the PIP
- be located in Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Areas (RRMA) 3–7
- make sure that an appropriately trained and qualified practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker is available for the minimum number of sessions per week to act as a referral point to domestic violence support services for women experiencing domestic violence.

Medicare Australia can provide the RRMA classification of your main practice location.

Minimum availability requirements

The minimum availability requirements of an eligible practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker are dependent on the size of the practice, which is determined by its SWPE value.

The availability requirements will assist to make sure the practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker is accessible to provide referral services to patients.

Regardless of size, the eligible practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker must be available to act as a referral point for women experiencing domestic violence for a minimum of two sessions per week, averaged over each PIP payment quarter. A session for the purposes of this incentive is a minimum of three and a half hours. The availability requirement increases by one session for each additional 500 SWPEs, rounded down, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

SWPE per practice	Minimum sessions required per week averaged over the PIP payment period
0 –1499	2
1500–1999	3
2000–2499	4
2500–2999	5
3000–3499	6
3500–3999	7
4000–4499	8
4500–4999	9
5000 or more	10 (full time)

As the number of SWPEs varies from quarter to quarter, Medicare Australia will advise participating practices of their SWPE value in each PIP quarterly payment advice. Practices must use the most recent PIP quarterly payment advice to identify the practice SWPE value, and use this value to determine the number of sessions that the practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker must be employed for. For example, the practice SWPE value from the May PIP payment advice should be used to determine the number of sessions the practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker should be employed for in May, June and July, for the August payment.

New practices must employ a practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker for a minimum of 2 sessions per week until the PIP quarterly payment advice shows the SWPE value of the practice.

Roles and functions of practice nurses and/or Aboriginal health workers

In order to be eligible for the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive, practice nurses and/or Aboriginal health workers must fulfil the following roles and functions:

- recognise indicators of domestic violence and/or risk of domestic violence
- be aware of local services that respond to domestic violence
- understand and provide patients with a range of referral options
- understand and provide patients experiencing domestic violence with safety options
- discuss and follow safety strategies for staff
- develop self awareness including recognition of the symptoms of stress or burnout, and seek appropriate support.

Which training courses are recognised for the purposes of the Practice Incentives Program Domestic Violence Incentive?

The primary training course that is recognised for the purposes of the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive is delivered face-to-face by Lifeline Australia to participants over two full days at locations across Australia. There is also an e-learning option. There is no fee for practice nurses and/or Aboriginal health workers to undertake the Lifeline training.

Information on training courses can be obtained from the Lifeline Australia website at http://www.lifeline.org.au/learn_more/lifeline_training_and_education/rto_training/divert

Other domestic violence training courses may be recognised for the purposes of the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive, providing they meet the following criteria:

- are accepted as equivalent to Health HLT07 and Community Services CHC02 by the National Training Authority
- are provided by a registered training organisation
- are a minimum of two days duration
- provide certification that the participant has been assessed as competent to the standards of the Health HLT07 and Community Services CHC02 training course
- have been undertaken by the eligible practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker within the previous three years of the practice applying for the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive.

If the practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker has completed a training course that meets the criteria set out above, contact Lifeline Australia, which will determine whether the training is recognised for the purposes of the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive.

Certification provided by Lifeline Australia is valid for three years from the date of certification for the purposes of the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive. A practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker certified by Lifeline Australia can act as a point of referral at multiple locations, provided the eligibility requirements are met at each practice.

Your practice will need to maintain documentary evidence that the practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker is certified as having completed recognised domestic violence training.

Is there financial support available to compensate my practice for attendance at training?

Support payments are available for practice nurses and/or Aboriginal health workers from your practice, to assist with travel and accommodation costs associated with attending training delivered by Lifeline Australia. To be eligible for a support payment, the practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker, and the general practice, must meet the eligibility requirements of the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive as described in these guidelines.

More information about how the support payments can be obtained call the Australian General Practice Network on **02 6288 0800**.

How does the practice apply for the Practice Incentives Program Domestic Violence Incentive?

Practices can apply for the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive, through Medicare Australia, by completing:

- the relevant parts of the Practice Incentives Program and General Practice Immunisation Incentive application form at the time of joining the PIP, or
- the Domestic Violence Incentive application form if the practice is already registered for the PIP.

The practice's authorised contact person is required to complete and sign the relevant parts of the application form.

What are the obligations of the practice?

The practice must:

- make sure that the practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker has a clear, unambiguous and agreed role description in relation to acting as a referral point for women experiencing domestic violence
- make sure that the minimum qualifications and educational requirements of the practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker acting as a point of referral through this incentive are current at all times
- be able to substantiate its claim for payments, including documentary evidence that the practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker is certified as having completed recognised domestic violence training, and supply this to Medicare Australia if requested
- maintain employment records, which may be required to demonstrate employment history to Medicare Australia if requested
- notify Medicare Australia in writing by the relevant 'point in time' date or within 14 calendar days, whichever date is earliest, if the availability levels of a practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker fall below the minimum requirements for the incentive during the quarter relating to the PIP payment cycle. Practices are informed of the minimum availability requirements in the previous quarter's PIP quarterly payment advice
- notify Medicare Australia in writing by the relevant 'point in time' date or within 14 calendar days, whichever date is earliest, if the appropriately trained practice nurse and/or Aboriginal health worker ceases employment or ceases to act as a referral point for women experiencing domestic violence
- provide information to Medicare Australia as part of its ongoing audit program to verify that the practice meets the PIP eligibility requirements
- make sure information provided to Medicare Australia is accurate
- advise Medicare Australia in writing, of any changes to practice arrangements by the relevant 'point in time' date or within 14 calendar days, whichever date is earliest. Refer to the *Practice Incentives Program Guidelines* for more information.

On joining the PIP, the practice must nominate an authorised contact person(s), who will be required to verify on the practice's behalf, any changes to information submitted for PIP claims and payments.

Is there an appeals process?

The PIP has an established appeals process. To request a review of a decision, the authorised contact person or the owners of the practice must write to Medicare Australia within 28 calendar days of the date on the notice of the decision they would like reviewed. Medicare Australia will review its decision and advise the practice in writing of the outcome.

Advice on more avenues of appeal is available from Medicare Australia.

More information

For more information about the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive email pip@medicareaustralia.gov.au or go to www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/pip or call **1800 222 032** (call charges may apply) between 8.30 am to 5.00 pm Australian Central Standard Time (ACST), Monday to Friday.

These Guidelines are for information purposes only. While it is presently intended that the Commonwealth will make payments as set out in these Guidelines, the making of payments is at the sole discretion of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth may alter arrangements for the Practice Incentives Program at any time and without notice.

The Commonwealth does not accept any legal liability or responsibility for any injury, loss or damage incurred by the use of, reliance on, or interpretation of the information provided in these Guidelines.