



GUIDE



UNDERSTANDING *M*EDICARE

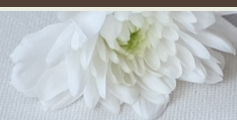
We get it - the Medicare rebate system is complex and difficult to wrap your head around. We hope this guide can help. Any questions, just shoot an email through to hello@tenderstudiopsychology.com.au.



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TENDER STUDIO PSYCHOLOGY



ALL ABOUT THE MEDICARE REBATE SYSTEM

What is a Mental Health Care Plan?

Since the introduction of the Better Access to Mental Health Care scheme in 2006, Australians have been able to claim money back on their psychology sessions through Medicare in the form of Mental Health Care Plans.

A Mental Health Care Plan (or a Mental Health Treatment Plan as it's officially called) is a brief document created by your General Practitioner (GP), Psychiatrist, or Paediatrician that reviews your current mental health.

To obtain a Mental Health Care Plan you'll need to sit down with your GP and complete an assessment. During this time they'll check in on your current coping, take a short history and may ask you to complete a questionnaire.

To be eligible you need to be happy with a recorded label, because Mental Health Care Plans are only available for "mental health disorders". This means your GP needs to diagnose you or state that you present with symptoms of a diagnosis.

Technically, your psychologist is only supposed to utilise certain forms of therapy for you to be eligible for the rebate. Mental Health Care Plans are provided for the provision of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) or Interpersonal Therapy (IPT). In reality, however, it's rare that a psychologist sticks to one strict form of therapy in the course of treatment. Most forms of therapy utilise techniques from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Interperson and borrow pretty heavily from each other anyway.

IMPORTANT

You're entitled to up to 10 rebated psychology sessions per year under a Mental Health Care Plan.

You need to see your GP or psychiatrist to get a Mental Health Care Plan before your first session with your psychologist. Keep reading for how to do that!

HOW DO I OBTAIN THE MEDICARE REBATE FOR PSYCHOLOGY SESSIONS?

Step 1

Find a psychologist you think would be a good fit. Do your research!

1

Step 2

Book in with them! This is important to find out whether they have the availability you are hoping for.

2

Step 3

Visit your GP who will determine whether you are eligible for a Mental Health Treatment Plan - if you are, they will write you a referral.

3

Step 4

See your psychologist for your first 6 rebated sessions. Be sure to email your referral to your psychologist beforehand.

4

Step 5

Return to your GP for a re-referral in order to obtain 4 more rebated sessions.

5

Step 6

After 10 sessions, either wait until the next calendar year for more rebated sessions OR continue with additional non-rebated sessions.

6

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I need a referral from a GP to see a psychologist?

You do not need a referral to make and attend an appointment. However, without a referral under a Mental Health Care Plan from your GP, you will be responsible for paying the full fee for each session without receiving the Medicare rebate. So, whilst you don't require a Mental Health Care Plan to receive psychological treatment, it does turn out to be cheaper for you in the long run!

What if my referral has another psychologist's name on it?

If you decide you'd prefer to see a different psychologist than the psychologist your GP has written on the referral, you don't need to return to your GP - Medicare allows us to accept referrals addressed to other psychologists. Once you have attended your first session, your psychologist will notify your GP that you have commenced treatment with us.

Can I still get a rebate for telehealth sessions? What about couples counselling?

You can absolutely get a rebate for telehealth sessions! If you have a Mental Health Care Plan and a referral from your GP, the same fees and rebate apply as face to face sessions (depending on your psychologist).

Unfortunately couples therapy isn't listed as one of the eligible treatments under Medicare so you're unable to claim any money back on these sessions.

What if I need more than 10 sessions?

You are able to claim a Medicare rebate for up to 10 sessions per calendar year (this means that even if you already had three rebated sessions with a psychologist last year, you can obtain another 10 rebated sessions this calendar year). After 10 rebated sessions, you are able to continue seeing your psychologist - you will just have to pay the full fee without receiving the Medicare rebate.

How do I claim the Medicare rebate?

This depends on your psychologist. At Tender Studio Psychology, we are able to automatically process Medicare rebates using our secure practice management software, Halaxy, with Medicare paying the rebate into your account within 2 days. This requires your Medicare card details and bank details to be held by our practice. Other psychologists may require that you put through the Medicare rebate claim yourself through the Medicare app.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS