



Important changes to the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS)

1 November 2014

Important changes to the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) are taking effect on 1 November 2014. The changes affect items for Haemoglobin A1c, folate, Vitamin D and Vitamin B12.

The changes have been announced by the federal government. We have briefly outlined the changes below and provided links with further information for each item.

Haemoglobin A1c

From 1 November 2014, HbA1c will also be Medicare rebatable as a diagnostic test in patients at risk of diabetes, once per year. Further information is available at:

<http://www.msac.gov.au/internet/msac/publishing.nsf/Content/1267>

Folate

From 1 November 2014, Medicare rebates for folate testing continue to be available for patients at risk of folate deficiency such as those with coeliac disease. Patients with macrocytic anaemia should have both B12 and folate requested. Serum folate has replaced red cell folate testing as the preferred method. Further information is available at:

<http://www.msac.gov.au/internet/msac/publishing.nsf/Content/0012r-public>

Vitamin D

From 1 November 2014, Medicare rebates for vitamin D testing will continue to be available for patients at risk of Vitamin D deficiency such as all those with chronic lack of sun exposure. Further information is available at:

<http://www.msac.gov.au/internet/msac/publishing.nsf/Content/0014r-public>

Vitamin B12

From 1 November 2014, people with low or equivocal total Vitamin B12 results (<260 pmol/L) will be routinely tested for holo-transcobalamin (active B12) to clarify their B12 status. Both total and active B12 are Medicare rebateable together under these circumstances, once per year. Further information is available at:

<http://www.msac.gov.au/internet/msac/publishing.nsf/Content/0013r-public>

For further information, please contact our Chemical Pathologists on 9287 7700.