

REVISED MBS RULES FOR CARDIOLOGY SERVICES

Dear Doctor,

As you may be aware, on the 1st August 2020, the Government enacted changes to the MBS item numbers for ECG, Holter monitoring, stress testing and echocardiography.

Essentially, we have moved from a system whereby GPs and Cardiologists could determine which services to deliver, to a more structured system whereby services will only attract Medicare rebates if certain criteria are met.

Our group is respectful of these modifications which are generally aimed at limiting low-yield investigations and the overall costs of our health care system

The major changes that will affect your patients are summarised below:

1. Surveillance echocardiography in a clinically stable patient needs to follow guidelines which typically limit repeat studies to 12-24 month intervals, depending on the severity of underlying disease.
2. Stress testing cannot be performed as a “screening” investigation in a well patient, rather the patient must have symptoms, be at risk for silent ischaemia, or have known disease in whom intervention has been deferred.
3. Holter monitoring is limited to patients with frequent symptoms or at risk of frequent significant arrhythmias.

Although we are respectful of these changes, we anticipate that there may well be occasions where the GP, patient or Cardiologist believes there may be a significant benefit in performing the test. Under those circumstances, we are happy to perform self-funded testing which typically will be at or below schedule fee, but will obviously result in significant out-of-pocket costs.

Please click here for further information on these MBS changes: [Quick Reference-Guide-Changes-CI-ECG-MPS.pdf \(mbsonline.gov.au\)](#)

If you have any questions regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact us or our practice manager.

Many thanks.

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