



Residential Medication Management Reviews Information for Aged Care Homes

A new Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) item - for Residential Medication Management Review (RMMR) for residents of aged care homes - was introduced on 1 November 2004.

The item provides a Medicare benefit for GP services where a GP works in collaboration with a pharmacist to review the medication management needs of residents who are likely to benefit from such a review. This includes residents for whom quality use of medicines may be an issue or who are at risk of medication misadventure because of their medical condition or medication regimen.

How does this new service differ from the medication management review currently undertaken by pharmacists in aged care homes?

Current arrangements provide for contracted medication review services by pharmacists. The new Medicare item provides a Medicare benefit for a service provided by a GP in collaboration with a reviewing pharmacist. It enables doctors to provide clinical information to inform the pharmacist's component of the review. It also enables the pharmacist to provide input from the outcomes of the review to inform the doctor's decision on the appropriate medication management strategies for the resident.

Will the current arrangements continue for pharmacist-only medication management reviews in aged care homes?

Residents will continue to be eligible for annual medication reviews provided by pharmacists without a request from a medical practitioner. Medication management reviews performed by pharmacists as a result of a request from a doctor will be remunerated under the existing 'per bed' payment arrangements.

Who can have a collaborative RMMR?

Collaborative RMMRs are available to permanent residents of aged care homes. There is no age restriction and residents may be receiving either low or high level care.

These services are not available to people receiving respite care. Instead, the Medicare item for Home Medicines Review is available to these people as they are classified as living in the community setting. Like collaborative RMMRs, Home Medicines Reviews are services provided jointly by GPs and pharmacists for patients at risk of medication misadventure, or who would benefit from such reviews by optimising their medication regimen.

Are collaborative RMMRs available to residents of all aged care facilities?

Collaborative RMMRs are available to permanent residents of aged care homes, a facility providing residential aged care services as defined in the *Aged Care Act 1997*. This includes facilities that were formerly known as nursing homes and hostels.

What about residents of supported accommodation facilities that are not funded by the Commonwealth under the Aged Care Act?

Collaborative RMMRs are available to residents receiving Commonwealth-subsidised aged care. Residents of institutions not funded by the Commonwealth under the *Aged Care Act* are eligible for the Medicare item Home Medicines Reviews, which provides a medication management review service to people living in the community.

When can a resident have a collaborative RMMR?

A collaborative RMMR is available to a new resident on admission into an aged care home. An existing resident can have an RMMR on an 'as required' basis, where it is required in the opinion of the resident's medical practitioner. Medicare benefits are available for one RMMR for a resident in any 12 month period, except where there has been a significant change in medical condition or medication regimen.

What changes in a resident would indicate the need for a collaborative RMMR?

An RMMR may be required where there has been a significant change in the resident's medical condition or medication regimen, for example (but not limited to):

- (a) discharge from an acute care facility in the previous four weeks;
- (b) significant changes to medication regimen in the past three months;
- (c) change in medical conditions or abilities (including falls, cognition, physical function);
- (d) prescription of medication with a narrow therapeutic index or requiring therapeutic monitoring;
- (e) presentation of symptoms suggestive of an adverse drug reaction;
- (f) sub-therapeutic response to treatment;
- (g) suspected non-compliance or problems with managing drug related therapeutic devices; or
- (h) at risk of inability to continue managing own medications (e.g. due to changes with dexterity, confusion or impaired sight).

Can staff of the aged care home identify the need for a collaborative RMMR for an existing resident?

Yes, the need for an RMMR for an existing resident may be identified by the resident's doctor, the reviewing pharmacist, supply pharmacist, Residential Aged Care Facility

staff, the resident, the resident's carer or other members of the resident's health care team. The resident's doctor must assess the clinical need for an RMMR from a quality use of medicines perspective and determine that an RMMR is necessary.

Who obtains the resident's consent to a collaborative RMMR?

A resident's consent should be obtained using normal procedures for obtaining consent for provision of a medical service, before proceeding with an RMMR. The GP undertaking an RMMR must ensure consent to the RMMR has been given by the resident or the resident's representative. Where an aged care home includes the issue of consent to medical care as part of the admission process, it can be helpful to include RMMR as part of this process.

What is the role of nurses in the provision of a collaborative RMMR?

The RMMR is a Medicare service similar to any other Medicare service available to residents of aged care homes. Nurses working in the aged care home are not required to undertake any components of the RMMR nor take on additional duties as a result of the RMMR. However, nurses can assist GPs in the same way that they assist with the provision of other GP consultations in aged care homes.

Where can I obtain further information?

For more information go to the Department of Health and Ageing website at:

www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/health-epc-whatsnew.htm