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MEDICARE BETTER ACCESS SCHEME (MBS) GP MHTP REFERRALS

There have been many changes to the MBS process and what constitutes a valid referral for accessing psychological supports under a Mental Health Treatment Plan (MHTP) in the last few years. We know how difficult and time consuming this can be for doctors, who are at the front line of supporting clients to access these services. Therefore, we developed this document to outline what we as the psychologist need from your referral to be Medicare compliant, and for us to be able to see your patients under the Medicare Better Access Scheme.

PROCESS

The below is a step by step of what psychologists need to be able to see patients under Medicare. If you have any questions at all, please feel free to email the practice at admin@sophieburrenpsychology.com or give me a call on 0480 366 766; a copy of the referral can be faxed to (08) 6154 6438.

INITIAL REFERRAL

We need a referral letter from you which includes the below. Once the client has accessed all the available referred initial sessions the psychologist will send you a brief report and request of a re-referral for the remaining available sessions if clinically indicated. Information required in referral letters:

- Date
- Patient's full name
- Patient's date of birth
- Patient's address
- Diagnosis or symptoms
- Referring practitioner's Medicare Provider Number
- Referrer signature
- The number of sessions required e.g., 6 sessions, 4 sessions etc. (please note, the maximum that can be referred at any one time is 6 sessions.)
- Specific request for services under the MBS – this is critical.

RE-REFERRAL

We will let our clients know when they need a re-referral from their GP to access the rest of their available sessions under the MBS. We need a letter from you outlining again:

- Date
- Patient's full name
- Patient's date of birth
- Patient's address
- Diagnosis or symptoms
- Referring Doctor's Medicare Provider Number
- Referrer signature
- The number of sessions required e.g., 6 sessions, 4 sessions etc. (please note, the maximum that can be referred at any one time is 6 sessions.)
- Specific request for services under the MBS – this is critical.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Based on the most current information from Medicare:

- A MHTP does not expire and does not need to be completed on an annual basis and only needs a review if the referring presentation has changed.
- Re-referral is all that is needed for us to continue sessions throughout the year, and can be done at any time without a time limit on same should patients need them sooner (i.e. the 3 month wait associated with a review does not apply to re-referrals).
- A MHTP is not considered an adequate referral on its own, and we do require a referral letter.
- The referral is still valid even if the psychologist has changed, and the client uses this referral with a new psychologist without updating the referred name.
- The psychologist must be in receipt of a valid referral dated prior to the date of the first appointment, or it is unable to be claimed. Referrals require specific information to be considered valid and compliant (please see first page for details).
- Patients are eligible for 10 MBS sessions total per calendar year (Jan – December). Sessions not used in the previous calendar year roll over to the new calendar year; but do count towards the new year's total allocation of 10 sessions.
- Referrals and re-referrals do require the number of sessions you are requesting under MBS.
- Please note the maximum number of sessions you can include on a referral for each course of treatment is 6 sessions when using the MBS items.
- **If the client has already seen another Psychologist for some of the yearly allocation, please let us know e.g., if 2 sessions are used under another psychologist please detail "2 sessions used, referring for 4 of initial 6 sessions"**

WHICH MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS ARE COVERED UNDER THE MEDICARE BETTER ACCESS SCHEME?

'Mental disorder' is a term used to describe a range of clinically diagnosable disorders that significantly impact on a person's emotions, thoughts, social skills, and decision-making. The Better Access initiative covers people with mental disorders arising from:

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| • Alcohol use disorder | • Eating disorders | • Posttraumatic stress disorder |
| • Adjustment disorder | • Enuresis | • Psychotic disorders |
| • Attention deficit disorder | • Generalised anxiety disorder | • Schizophrenia |
| • Bereavement disorder | • Mental disorder, not otherwise specified | • Sexual disorders |
| • Bipolar disorder | • Obsessive compulsive disorder | • Sleep problems |
| • Chronic fatigue | • Panic disorder | • Co-morbid anxiety and depression |
| • Conduct disorder | • Phobic disorder | • Unexplained somatic complaints |
| • Depression | | |
| • Dissociative disorder | | |
| • Drug use disorder | | |