Asthma Cycle of Care

Information sheet

This guide provides information on how to complete the Asthma Cycle of Care and how to claim the MBS schedule fees.

The prevalence of asthma is high in Australia compared with other countries, affecting 14–16 per cent of children and 10–12 per cent of adults.

A systematic review of 24 randomised controlled trials found that optimal self-management education—consisting of self-monitoring, regular medical review, and an individualised written action plan—leads to significant reductions in hospitalisations, emergency department visits, and unscheduled doctor visits.

Eligibility

Eligible patients for the Asthma Cycle of Care must have the below moderate to severe asthma symptoms:
- frequency of episodes
- use of preventer medication
- bronchodilator use more than three times per week
- hospital attendance following an acute attack.

Asthma Cycle of Care process

- at least two asthma related consultations in four weeks (minimum) to 12 months (maximum)
- at least one of these consultations should be a review consultation that was planned at a previous consultation.

These visits must include:
- diagnosis and assessment of severity
- review of medication
- written asthma action plan with education given to the patient.

Utilising a practice nurse

A practice nurse can be used to assist GPs with the Asthma Cycle of Care by:
- providing patient education
- recording peak-flow or spirometry results
- taking detailed patient and medication history
- reviewing device techniques.

Payments

| Sign-on payment | N/A | $0.25 per FTE GP | • one-off payment only
|                 |     |                 | • practice must be registered for PIP
|                 |     |                 | • incentive payable with quarterly PIP payments
| Payment upon completion of second visit | Level B: 2546 and 2547  
Level C: 2552 and 2553  
Level D: 2558 and 2559 | $100 per patient PLUS consultation fees | These item numbers should be used in place of the usual attendance items when a consultation completes the minimum requirements for the Asthma Cycle of Care.

General practice example

The following is an example of how a general practice would utilise practice nurses for the best implementation of the Asthma Cycle of Care.

Visit 1:
- nurse to administer spirometry (where available) or peak flow, asthma history, symptoms, document medications, device use, and education
- GP to review results—medication review, oversee patient education requirements, and complete written Asthma Action Plan for patient
- GP to reinforce need for next visit and book follow up appointment.

Visit 2:
- nurse to administer spirometry (where available) or peak flow, review of symptom diary—medication review and follow-up education
- GP to review Asthma Action Plan
- GP to reinforce need for next visit and book follow up appointment.

Asthma may be treated in general practice using either the Asthma Cycle of Care or the General Practice Management Plan (GPMP). Both schemes should not be claimed in the same 12 months for the same patient, due to overlap in the services provided.

For patients with complex needs, GPMP and TCA (WHAT IS THIS ACRONYM?) and Asthma Cycle of Care can be provided.
The following is an example of how a general practice would utilise practice nurses for the best implementation of the Asthma Cycle of Care.

**Suggestions for Asthma Cycle of Care visit structure**

Visit 1 should be billed under normal MBS items 23/36 or 44.

*This will often be the visit at which your patient presents with an unrelated problem and doesn’t mention asthma until the end of the consultation.*

- manage the issue that caused the asthma to be discussed—e.g. asthma symptoms, request for a script
- introduce the concept of a contract of care and the reasons for review
- reinforce need for next visit and book follow up appointment.

Visit 2 should be billed under MBS items in group A18 or A19 (2546, 2552, or 2558). Include item 11506 if spirometry performed.

*This visit should be approximately two weeks later.*

**New patients:** ascertain status including history, medication, and management.

**Existing patients:** assess present situation including review of medical records and consolidation/collection of information on history, medication, and management.

- knowledge: what do they know and what do they need to know?
- perception: how do they feel about their asthma?
- what do they want from you as their GP?
- review medication device technique
- perform physical examination—including spirometry
- grade asthma severity and level of control
- consider two weeks of peak expiratory flow rate (PEFR) recording and charting
- is a change in medication required?
- consider if clinically appropriate for home medicines review—write referral if so
- complete Asthma Action Plan for patient to follow until next visit
- identify triggers—consider RAST and skin prick testing.

Visit 3 should be billed under normal MBS items 23/36 or 44. Include item 11506 if spirometry performed.

*This visit should be approximately two weeks later.*

**New patients:** ascertain status including history, medication, and management.

**Existing patients:** assess present situation including review of medical records and consolidation/collection of information on history, medication, and management.

- review patient and his/her PEFR record
- perform spirometry (if not already done) or consider re-doing
- assess progress, review medication devices and techniques
- review and complete written asthma action plan
- discuss results of RAST and skin-prick testing
- Is a change in medication required?
- Check on, reinforce, and expand education
- answer any questions
- place patient on 12 month recall for Asthma Cycle of Care
- Complete HMR Medication Management Plan (finalise MBS item 900 claim).

**Action plan for Best Practice can be located as below:**

1. Enter patient name
2. Click ‘Clinical’
3. Click ‘Asthma Action Plan’

**Action plan for Medical Director v3 can be located as below:**

1. Enter patient name
2. Click ‘Asthma action plan’ via ‘Assessment’ or the respiratory calculator tool.