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## Medicare Rebate for Counselling Services

Through Medicare's Better Mental Health Initiative many people are eligible for a rebate for individual counselling that relates to a mental health related concern.

### Who is eligible?

People who are experiencing difficulties with their thoughts, emotions, behaviour, social skills or decision making are eligible for a partial rebate. Medicare terms these types of difficulties as a 'mental health disorder'. Examples of situations where a person might fit into this category include when a person is experiencing:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Significant grief
- Sleep problems
- Post traumatic stress disorder
- Eating disorders
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Psychotic disorders
- Schizophrenia
- Phobias
- Sexual difficulties
- Conduct disorder

### Does that mean I have to have a mental illness to be eligible?

No. A mental health disorder does not mean you have a mental illness, it means you are having difficulties with your emotions, thoughts, behaviours, social skills or decision making.

### What do I need to do to apply?

To apply for the rebate, you need to have a **Mental Health Care Plan** (item number 2710) completed by your GP, psychiatrist or paediatrician prior to your counselling session. This involves your doctor getting an overview of your situation and developing a treatment plan involving a referral to Life Supports Counselling Service. Make sure you book a longer appointment with your doctor to enable the plan to be completed in one appointment. This cost of this appointment should be completely covered by Medicare.

You will need to supply your doctor with the following information about the Life Supports counsellor:

Marcus Andrews  
Accredited Mental Health Social Worker  
Medicare Provider Number: 2884791X  
Life Supports Counselling Service  
Level 1/401 Whitehorse Road  
Balwyn 3103  
Phone 1300 73 50 30

How much of the counselling fee is covered?

Approximately two thirds of the total fee for your counselling session is covered by Medicare. You will be required to make payment for the full fee at the time of the appointment; you can then claim your refund through Medicare. Life Supports fees also contribute toward your Medicare safety net which means that once you have reached your safety net, you will get nearly all your Life Supports fees refunded through Medicare.

How many sessions are covered?

Typically twelve counselling sessions are covered per calendar year. In exceptional circumstances an additional six sessions can be funded. You are required to attend a review appointment with your doctor after six and twelve sessions.

Does this apply to home visits as well as appointments at Life Supports rooms?

Yes. You will get a larger rebate through Medicare for a home visit.

Does this cover all the Life Supports counsellors?

At this stage, Marcus Andrews is the only Life Supports counsellor who you can see to get a Medicare rebate.

What can I do if I have any queries?

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact our office on Ph. 1300 73 50 30.