

Nursing Medicare Items, PIP and SIP Changes – as of January 1 2012

As of 31/12/11, the current PIP/SIP nurse payments, and MBS nurse time numbers 10993, 10994, 10995, 10996, 10998 and 10999 will no longer be in use.

As of 01/01/12, the only MBS nurse time numbers in use will be 10986, 10987 and 10997.

As of 01/01/12, the Practice Nurse Incentive Program (PNIP) requirements are as follows:

- **Requirements – the practice must:**
 - Be accredited and have at least one practicing GP
 - Ensure each practicing GP holds current public liability insurance
 - Employ a Nurse, Aboriginal Health Worker or Allied Health Professional
 - Complete the PNIP application form (available online as of June 2011)

- **How much is the PNIP?**
 - An eligible practice is able to receive up to five individual Practice Nurse incentive payments
 - 1 x incentive payment = 1 x FTE GP (1000 SWPE) = 0.33FTE Nurse/AHW/ AHP
 - \$25,000 per year, per 1000 SWPE where an RN works at least 12 hours and 40 minutes per week
 - \$12,500 per year, per 1000 SWPE where an EN works at least 12 hours and 40 minutes per week
 - Maximum = 5 incentive payments = 5 x FTE GP (5000 SWPE) = 1.65 FTE eligible nurse/AHW /AHP
 - Pro-rata payments will be made
 - Location loadings apply: inner regional = 20%, outer regional = 30%, remote = 40%, very remote = 50%
 - AMS/ACCHO practices will receive a 1.5 loading on their SWPE
 - A PNIP calculator will be made available online, to assist with individual practice calculation

SWPE	Minimum # of practice nurse hours per week required for full incentive payment	Incentive for a Registered Nurse (or allied health professional, where applicable)	Incentive for an Enrolled Nurse or Aboriginal Health Worker
1,000	12 hours 40 minutes	\$25,000	\$12,500
2,000	25 hours 20 minutes	\$50,000	\$25,000
3,000	38 hours	\$75,000	\$37,500
4,000	50 hours 40 minutes	\$100,000	\$50,000
5,000	63 hours 20 minutes	\$125,000	\$62,500

- **What if the payment is less than previous payment under the PIP?**
 - Where an accredited practice receives less income under the PNIP program than received the preceding year under the Nurse PIP + MBS items, a top-up payment will be made available
 - This will be available for the period 01/01/2012 to 31/12/14, on receipt of appropriate details

- **What if the practice is not accredited?**
 - A non-accredited practice is ineligible to apply for the PNIP
 - A one-off 'Accreditation Support Payment' of \$5,000 is available to assist a non-accredited practice to achieve accreditation
 - Where a non-accredited practice receives less income under the PNIP program than they received in the preceding year under MBS nurse items, a 'Grandparent Payment' will be made available
 - 'Grandparent Payment' = income received in the preceding year from MBS nurse items
 - The 'Grandparent Payment' will be made available from 01/01/2011 to 31/12/2014
 - Practices will be required to provide appropriate details to allow Medicare Australia to calculate and substantiate the grandparent payment; the practice must register for this using the PNIP forms.

- **Practices eligible for the PNIP who provide GP services to Department of Veterans' Affairs-entitled persons will be eligible to an annual, per veteran payment.**
 - An amount will be paid for each Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card holder, regardless of the practice location, nursing qualifications or the number of nurses per practice. There are no limitations on the number of Department of Veterans' Affairs loadings paid per practice.
 - Where a Gold Card holder chooses to use more than one practice each year, the Department of Veterans' Affairs loading will be apportioned across the practices based on the percentage of total consultation fees paid.

- **PNIP audit**
 - Medicare Australia conducts audits of practices receiving payments under the PNIP scheme, to verify practices are meeting the eligibility requirements. Audits may include practice visits or a review of practice documentation. If requested by Medicare Australia, practices must provide documentary evidence to support their eligibility and claims for payment.

- **Practices may apply to join the PNIP at any time from 1 October 2011.**
 - Application forms will be available from this date on the Medicare Australia website at <http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/pnip>
 - Medicare Australia will advise practices in writing of receipt of their application form. All applications received will be assessed for eligibility from 1 January 2012.
 - To be eligible for a payment in February 2012, the application must be received by Medicare Australia on or before Friday, 31 January 2012.

If you have further enquiries about any of the information listed above, please contact Medicare Australia via email at pnip@medicareaustralia.gov.au.