



Chronic Disease Management Fact Sheet

What is a Chronic Disease?

A chronic disease is one that is ongoing and generally isn't curable; this includes conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma, arthritis, developmental/learning issues, COPD and inflammatory bowel diseases. With the correct management, however, the impact of the disease and the possibility of future complications can usually be reduced. The correct management may include medications, surgery or other treatment as prescribed by your doctor. Often making changes to your lifestyle such as eating well, optimising your weight, exercising, quitting smoking and decreasing your alcohol intake can have a positive impact on managing a chronic disease.

What is a GP Management Plan (or care plan)?

A GP Management Plan (GPMP) is a plan of care and action to manage your chronic disease. This is drawn up in consultation with you and can help assist you in understanding how to manage your chronic illness. Our Chronic Disease Management nurse may meet with you before you see your GP to assist in preparation of this.

A GPMP will identify your health and care needs; set out the services to be provided by your GP and list the actions you can take to manage your condition.

Only your regular GP should undertake a GPMP.

What is a Team Care Arrangement?

Some people who have a chronic disease will need ongoing assistance with their health from other health care providers. If you have chronic and complex care needs that require assistance from **at least three** care providers (2 in addition to your GP), then your GP may develop a Team Care Arrangement (TCA) which details the care you require and who is providing this. This has the advantage of being shared with other care providers to improve the coordination of your health care. If there are any aspects of your care that you do not wish discussed with your other care providers, you can inform your GP/Chronic Disease Management nurse.

Referrals for allied health services

If you have **both a GPMP and a TCA**, then you may be eligible for Medicare rebates for specific allied health services that your GP has included in your TCA as a provider of care for your chronic condition. Currently, you may receive a **total** of 5 Medicare rebatable visits per calendar year. Allied health professionals included in this are:

- Aboriginal health worker
- Audiologist
- Chiropractor
- Diabetes Educator

- Dietitian
- Exercise physiologist
- Mental Health Worker
- Occupational Therapist
- Osteopath
- Physiotherapist
- Podiatrist
- Psychologist
- Speech pathologist

As these health professionals are private practitioners, they may charge a gap on top of the Medicare rebate – please check with the individual care provider before you see them so that you are aware of any out of pocket costs for which you will be responsible.

How do I know if I am eligible for this?

You are only eligible for a GPMP and TCA if you have a chronic disease and have three or more providers involved in your care. We often see people referred to us by an allied health professional to obtain a “plan” so they will get a Medicare rebate, but unless you satisfy the Medicare criteria as outlined above, this will not be possible. Ask your GP – they will determine if you fulfil Medicare Australia’s eligibility requirement as Medicare Australia has restrictions on who can and cannot have a GPMP and TCA prepared.

The time required to prepare a plan will vary and depend on how complex your needs are.