

FACT SHEET

Australia's first Medicare Benefits Scheme item number for eating disorders

On Sunday 9th December, Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Health Minister Hon Greg Hunt announced the Australian Government's commitment to a first ever dedicated Medicare Benefits Scheme item number for eating disorders treatment in Australia.

Frequently asked questions regarding this trial have been clarified below.

What will the new Medicare support for eating disorders include?

The new Medicare support comprises a first ever dedicated single Medicare Benefits Scheme item number for eating disorder treatment. This new Medicare support will allow Australians with eating disorders to access up to 60 Medicare funded sessions of treatment comprising 40 psychotherapeutic sessions and 20 dietetic sessions.

This is a \$110.7 million investment and estimated to reach 30,000 Australians annually.

When will the Medicare support be available for all Australians?

The new Medicare support will be available from 1st November 2019.

Is the Medicare support for all eating disorders?

The Medicare item number is for all eating disorders under the DSM-5 including Anorexia Nervosa, Binge Eating Disorder, Bulimia Nervosa and OSFED, for severe and complex presentations

How will someone be eligible for the new Medicare support?

In order to access this support diagnosis will need to be provided by two health practitioners – a medical practitioner such as a GP or paediatrician plus a mental health professional experienced in eating disorders such as a psychologist.

Diagnosis will not be based on BMI measurement.

What will the process of treatment include?

The details for the process will be provided as soon as they have been finalised. At this stage we understand the process to include initial access to 20 sessions of psychotherapy and 10 sessions of dietetics. Following a review by GP and psychologist, a further 20 psychotherapy sessions and a further 10 dietetic sessions.

The sessions will need to be provided by health and allied health professionals who are appropriately trained to practice in eating disorders.

The announcement mentioned severe and complex eating disorders. What is defined as 'severe' and 'complex'?

Butterfly is working with the federal Department of Health and the eating disorders sector to further define these terms as they apply to individual cases. We will release more information when it comes to hand.

As mentioned by the PM and Minister Hunt at the announcement on Sunday 9th December this is expected to reach approximately 30,000 Australians, however they do not wish to see this as 'capped' and aim to deliver according to need.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Butterfly will continue to update this FAQ as more information comes to hand. Thank you for your patience.

HELP AND SUPPORT

Anyone needing support with eating disorders or body image issues is encouraged to contact **Butterfly Foundation's National Helpline** on **1800 33 4673** or support@thebutterflyfoundation.org.au

For urgent support call Lifeline 13 11 14