



Practice Incentives Program Domestic Violence Incentive guidelines

The following guidelines provide information about the Practice Incentives Program (PIP) Domestic Violence Incentive.

Section 1—Introduction

The PIP provides a number of incentives that aim to encourage general practices to improve the quality of care provided to patients. Practices must be accredited or registered for accreditation against the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners *Standards for general practices* to participate in the PIP.

Payments are made through the PIP:

- for improved use of information management and information technology (IM/IT)
- to ensure patients have access to after hours care
- to support rural practices
- to encourage rural GPs to provide procedural services
- to support practices to employ practice nurses
- to encourage practices to teach medical students
- for participating in educational activities to improve prescribing behaviour
- to encourage cervical screening
- for best practice management of patients with asthma and diabetes
- to encourage general practices in rural and remote areas to act as a referral point for people experiencing domestic violence.

The PIP is administered by Medicare Australia on behalf of the Department of Health and Ageing.

Section 2—The PIP Domestic Violence Incentive

The PIP Domestic Violence Incentive aims to encourage general practices in rural and remote areas to act as a referral point for people experiencing domestic violence.

Section 3—What are the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive payments and requirements?

A payment of \$1 per Standardised Whole Patient Equivalent (SWPE) per year is made to practices that meet the requirements of the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive, and is capped at \$4000 per annum. Payments are made by Medicare Australia to eligible practices as part of each quarterly PIP payment.

In order for the practice to be eligible for the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive, practice nurses or Aboriginal health workers must meet the minimum qualification and education requirements described below:

- Registered nurses who hold current registration with the relevant registration board in the state or territory of the practice and who:
 - are certified by Lifeline as having completed recognised domestic violence training (see Section 7)
- and**
 - are currently employed or retained by the practice.
- Enrolled nurses[†] who hold current registration with the relevant registration board in the state or territory of the practice and who:
 - are certified by Lifeline as having completed recognised domestic violence training (see Section 7)
- and**
 - are employed or retained by the practice.
- Aboriginal health workers who hold Certificate Level III or above in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health from a recognised institute^{††} and who:
 - are certified by Lifeline as having completed recognised domestic violence training (see Section 7)
- and**
 - are currently employed or retained by the practice.

Section 4—Is our practice eligible for the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive?

To be eligible for the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive, the practice must:

- participate in the PIP
- be classified under the *Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Areas (RRMA) Classification* as a RRMA 3–7 location
- ensure that an appropriately trained and qualified practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker (see Section 3) is available for the minimum number of sessions per week (see Section 5) to act as a referral point to domestic violence support services for people experiencing domestic violence.

Please note that more than one practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker can nominate for training. However, training places are subject to availability and support to attend training is limited to two participants per practice.

Section 5—Minimum availability requirements

The minimum availability requirements of an eligible practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker are dependent upon the size of the practice, which is determined by its SWPE value. The availability requirements will assist to ensure that the practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker is accessible to provide referral services.

Regardless of size, the eligible practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker must be available to act as a referral point for people experiencing domestic violence for a minimum of two sessions per week, averaged over each PIP payment quarter. A session for the purposes of this incentive is a minimum of three and a half hours. The availability requirement increases by one session for each additional 500 SWPEs, rounded down, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

SWPE per practice	Minimum sessions required per week averaged over the PIP payment period
0–1499	2
1500–1999	3
2000–2499	4
2500–2999	5
3000–3499	6
3500–3999	7
4000–4499	8
4500–4999	9
5000 or more	10 ^{†††}

As the number of SWPEs varies from quarter to quarter, Medicare Australia will advise participating practices of their SWPE level in each quarterly PIP statement. Practices must check their SWPE level in the previous PIP quarterly statements to be aware of the required number of sessions per week the practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker must provide in order to be eligible for the payment.

Section 6—Roles and functions of practice nurses and Aboriginal health workers

In order to be eligible for the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive, practice nurses or Aboriginal health workers must fulfil the following roles and functions:

- recognise indicators of domestic violence and/or risk of domestic violence
- be aware of local services that respond to domestic violence
- understand and provide patients with a range of referral options
- understand and provide patients experiencing domestic violence with safety options
- discuss and follow safety strategies for staff
- develop self awareness including recognition of symptoms of stress or burnout and seek appropriate support.

Section 7—Which training courses are recognised for the purposes of the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive?

The primary training course that is recognised for the purposes of the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive is delivered face-to-face by Lifeline to training participants over two full days at Lifeline locations across Australia. There is also an e-learning option. There is no fee for practice nurses or Aboriginal health workers to undertake the Lifeline training.

A schedule of training times and locations, and information about the e-learning option, is available by contacting the Lifeline Australia office on **02 6215 9400** or email **national@lifeline.org.au**

Other domestic violence training courses may be recognised for the purposes of the Domestic Violence Incentive, providing they meet the following criteria:

- are accepted as equivalent to Health HLT07 and Community Services CHC02 by the National Training Authority

- are provided by a registered training organisation
- are a minimum of two days duration
- provide certification that the participant has been assessed as competent to the standards of the Health HLT07 and Community Services CHC02 training course
- have been undertaken by the eligible practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker within the previous three years of the practice applying for the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive.

If your practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker has completed a training course that meets the criteria set out above, please contact Lifeline, which will determine whether the training is recognised for the purposes of the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive.

Certification provided by Lifeline is valid for three years from the date of certification for the purposes of the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive. A practice nurse and Aboriginal health worker certified by Lifeline can act as a point of referral at multiple locations provided the eligibility requirements are met at each practice.

Please note that your practice will need to maintain documentary evidence that the practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker is certified as having completed recognised domestic violence training.

Section 8—Is there financial support available to compensate my practice for attendance at training?

Support payments may be available for up to two practice nurses or Aboriginal health workers to assist with travel and accommodation costs associated with attending training for practice nurses or Aboriginal health workers. The practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker, and general practice, must meet the eligibility requirements of the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive as described in these program guidelines.

Further information about the support payments can be obtained by calling the Australian General Practice Network on **02 6288 0800**.

Section 9—How does the practice apply for the PIP Domestic Violence Incentive?

Practices can apply for this payment by completing the PIP Domestic Violence application form available from Medicare Australia by emailing **pip@medicareaustralia.gov.au** or by calling the PIP enquiry line on **1800 222 032****.

The authorised contact person for the practice is required to complete and sign the application form.

Practices may apply for this incentive prior to the practice nurse and Aboriginal health worker having completed the training. However, practices must ensure that the training of the practice nurse and Aboriginal health worker is certified by Lifeline by the day before the first day of the next payment quarter, for example, by 30 April in order to be eligible for the May quarter payment.

Section 10—What are the obligations of the practice?

The practice must:

- ensure that the practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker has a clear, unambiguous and agreed role description in relation to acting as a referral point for people experiencing domestic violence as set out in Section 6
- ensure that the minimum qualifications and educational requirements of the practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker acting as a point of referral through this incentive are current at all times, and supply relevant documentation confirming this to the Department of Health and Ageing and/or Medicare Australia on request
- maintain documentary evidence that the practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker is certified as having completed recognised domestic violence training, and supply this to the Department of Health and Ageing and/or Medicare Australia on request
- maintain employment records, which may be required to demonstrate employment history to the Department of Health and Ageing and/or Medicare Australia on request
- maintain high-level data on the number of patients referred and the referral option provided for the purpose of measuring the impact of the incentive

- notify Medicare Australia within 14 calendar days if the availability levels of a practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker fall below the minimum requirements for the incentive during the quarter relating to the PIP payment cycle. Practices are informed of the minimum availability requirements in the previous quarter's PIP payment statement
- notify Medicare Australia within 14 calendar days if the appropriately trained practice nurse or Aboriginal health worker ceases employment or acting as a referral point for people experiencing domestic violence
- provide information to Medicare Australia as part of its ongoing audit program to verify that the practice meets PIP eligibility criteria
- ensure information provided to Medicare Australia is accurate
- advise Medicare Australia within 14 calendar days of any changes that may affect the practice's eligibility for PIP payments
- nominate at least one PIP contact person from the practice, who will be required to verify on the practice's behalf, any changes to information submitted for PIP claims and payments.

Section 11—Is there an appeals process?

The PIP has an established appeals process. To appeal any decision made in regard to PIP eligibility or payments, the practice must write to Medicare Australia within 28 calendar days of receiving notice of the decision it would like reviewed. Medicare Australia will review its decision and advise the practice in writing of the outcome.

Advice on further avenues of appeal is available by emailing **pip@medicareaustralia.gov.au** or by calling the PIP enquiry line.

More PIP information

Online **www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/pip**

Email **pip@medicareaustralia.gov.au**

Call **1800 222 032****

Hours of operation are between 8:30 am–5:00 pm, Australian Central Standard Time

****Call charges apply from mobile and pay phones only**

[†]professional nursing standards require that an enrolled nurse must be supervised by a registered nurse. Supervision may be direct or indirect, but appropriate supervisory arrangements must be in place.

^{††}for a comprehensive list of approved courses and training, please email **pip@medicareaustralia.gov.au** or call the Medicare Australia PIP enquiry line on **1800 222 032**** and request a copy of Guidelines for Employing an Aboriginal Health Worker.

^{†††}10 sessions denotes a full time employee.