



## PROCEDURAL GP PAYMENT » QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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### WHAT CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE TO THE PROCEDURAL GP PAYMENT?

On 8 September 2006, the Australian Government announced an increase in the procedural GP payment to a rural GP who delivers 20 or more babies a year or meets the obstetric needs of their community.

A rural GP undertaking 20 or more deliveries a year will now be eligible for \$17,000 per year in procedural payments.

As for the existing Procedural GP Payment, payments are made to the practice for each eligible GP and a rural loading is applied to the payment.

### WHY HAS THE GOVERNMENT MADE THIS CHANGE?

The payments to rural general practices providing obstetric services have been increased to help maintain access to obstetric services for women in rural and remote areas.

### WHAT ARE THE PAYMENTS AND HOW HAVE THEY CHANGED?

Tiers 1 and 2 of the existing Procedural GP Payment which provide incentive payments of \$2,000 and \$4,000 respectively are unchanged.

Tier 3 has changed to only provide the payment of \$10,000 a year for a GP providing 50 or more surgical and/or anaesthetic and/or obstetric services a year.

A new Tier 4 has been introduced which provides a payment of \$17,000 a year for a GP delivering 20 or more babies a year or who meets the community's need for obstetric services.

### WHEN WILL THE NEW PAYMENTS COMMENCE?

The increased payments will take effect from November 2006. To enable the administrative arrangements to be implemented, practices eligible for payment in the November 2006 and/or February 2007 quarters will receive payment through the usual PIP recalculation process scheduled for June 2007.

### IF A GP DELIVERS LESS THAN 20 BABIES A YEAR, WOULD THE PRACTICE QUALIFY FOR TIER 4 PAYMENTS?

A sole practitioner who delivers all of the babies in a community may qualify for the increased Tier 4 payment if the number of deliveries in the community was less than 20. The practice would need to substantiate that it is delivering all the babies born in the community to receive this payment.

Practices with more than one GP cannot count the combined number of deliveries in the practice to qualify for this tier.

### WHY DID THE MINISTER ANNOUNCE THAT THE PAYMENTS WOULD INCREASE TO \$25,500 FOR THE MOST REMOTE PRACTICES?

As previously, a PIP rural loading ranging from 15 to 50% depending on the practice location is applied to the procedural GP payments. For example, a practice in the most remote area with a procedural GP delivering 20 or more babies a year, would be eligible for a Tier 4 payment of \$17,000 and \$8,500 in rural loading. The rural loading is automatically paid to the practice.

### HOW CAN A PRACTICE APPLY FOR THE NEW LEVEL OF PAYMENT?

An application form for the Procedural GP Payment will be sent to all rural practices participating in the PIP.

To be eligible for payments from November 2006, practices must complete and return the application form to Medicare Australia by 31 March 2007.

Application forms will also be available from Medicare Australia.

### WHERE CAN I GET FURTHER INFORMATION?

For further information on the Procedural GP Payment or other PIP incentives, contact the

PIP Enquiry Line on telephone 1800 222 032.