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ACCESS ANAESTHETICS NOVEMBER 2008 UPDATE

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THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS IMPORTANT INFORMATION.
PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ IT CAREFULLY.

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1. Medicare/RVG Items update
2. Health fund fee schedules update
3. TP, WC and Time based values
4. Program update version 5.5
5. Eclipse news
6. Installation instructions
7. When to install the updates
8. How to revert to an older fee schedule

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1. MEDICARE / RVG ITEMS UPDATE

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The November Medicare schedule is now available for downloading.

The MBS RVG unit value has increased from \$17.90 to \$18.30. There are two new items of interest to anaesthetists - 20804 for free flap surgery in the lower abdomen (not included in the July update) and 22051 for Intraoperative Transoesophageal Echocardiography. This TOE item is a 'monitoring' item to replace item 55130, while item 55135 should still be used as a 'diagnostic' item for cardiac valve surgery.

The Items file also includes the ASA RVG schedule. This includes the new item, CV083 - 5 units - Major peripheral nerve block performed perioperatively with the introduction of a catheter to allow continuous nerve blockade to provide post operative pain relief.

For full details of the MBS and RVG changes, see the memo from Andrew Mulcahy at the ASA website --->> <http://www.asa.org.au/page.aspx?A=7956>. The Medicare schedule can also be viewed online at the Medicare website --->> <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/Medicare-Benefits-Schedule-MBS-1>.

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2. HEALTH FUND FEE SCHEDULES UPDATE

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Most of the health funds have now provided updated fee schedules effective on November 1. The exceptions are NIB, MBF Alliances (NRMA, SGIC, SGIO) and St Lukes. We will provide further updates as these come to hand.

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3. TP, WC and TIME BASED VALUES

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The ASA has approved an increase in the maximum recommended ASA RVG unit value to \$67.00. If you wish to use this for your standard RVG, third party, or workers compensation rates, open Access Anaesthetics, open the Options form, and enter the new rates into the Unit Values page. There is a button on the form which will automate this process, especially for group practices which may need to insert the rates into multiple doctors files.

If you want to use the Victorian Workcover Time-Engaged fees for anaesthetists, in Access Anaesthetics click Tools > Time based fees, and enter the following details into the relevant fields ...

Pre-anaesthetic consultation - \$95.75
ANINHRS - Each of first 2 15 min periods - \$104.20
ANINHRS - Each subsequent 15 min - \$64.25
ANOUTHRS - For the first 30 min - \$250.30
ANOUTHRS - For each subsequent 30 min - \$154.10

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4. PROGRAM UPDATE VERSION 5.5

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Program version 5.5 is now available. Most clients would not have received a program update since version 4.6. This is not because we have forgotten you, but because we have spent the last 12 months running extensive testing and fine tuning of our Eclipse system and did not want to release it until we were happy that it was functioning smoothly. We are happy to report that we have now reached this point, and are now making the Eclipse system available to all clients. Additional details are given below.

Version 5.5 also includes a significant number of enhancements unrelated to Eclipse. To read about what's new, click Help > What's New on the Access Anaesthetics toolbar. The website also has a detailed online 'What's new' file and a pdf document that contains a summary of all non Eclipse-related changes since version 4.6. These are available on the following page ---> <http://www.healthbase.com.au/aa/dloadupdates.htm>.

For group practices, please note that if you send satellite files to any group members, those members should also upgrade to the latest program version.

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5. ECLIPSE NEWS

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Eclipse is now available in version 5.5 of Access Anaesthetics. There are a number of steps to go through to get it running and these are described in detail on our website (<http://www.healthbase.com.au/aa/eclipse.htm>) or in the built-in help in Access Anaesthetics (click Help > Help Eclipse from the Main Menu or Eclipse Menu). The first step required is to register with Medicare. All the required details and links to downloadable forms are provided in the above documents. These also provide comprehensive instructions to guide you through the process of creating and sending electronic claims.

Once you begin sending online claims, you will be eligible to receive the Medicare incentive payment of \$750 (metropolitan) or \$1000 (rural). This payment is for each practice, not for each doctor in a multiple doctor practice. For full details, see ---> <http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/incentives/medicare-initiatives.jsp#N10155>.

All clients need an 8 character Location ID from us to complete their Medicare registration form. Medicare call this the "Minor Customer ID". When you decide to register for Eclipse, please contact us (preferably by email) and we will send your Location ID.

Although we anticipate that some clients may need assistance getting Eclipse running, we would appreciate if you could follow the step-by-step instructions carefully before calling us for help. Access Anaesthetics has a built-in checklist on the Eclipse Menu to assist with this..

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6. INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

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- Connect to the Internet in your usual way.
- Open Access Anaesthetics and click Maintenance Menu.
- Click Web Update.
- Click Search for Updates.
- A list of available updates will be shown. Click the 'Download and Install' button.

Once this process is finished, you should close and reopen Access Anaesthetics to complete the installation. When you do this, you will be prompted to complete the program update. For group practices, the Web Update process only needs to be done on one PC. The other PCs should then be prompted to install the downloaded program update the next time Access Anaesthetics is started.

To verify that the update was installed correctly, check the version information on the lower left of the Main Menu. The Program version should be 5.5, the Data version 5, the Items version 8.2 (Nov 08) and the funds version 8.07 (Nov 08). If the Items and/or fund versions are incorrect, go to the Maintenance Menu and select the correct schedule version from the MBS/RVG or Health Funds buttons. For the MBS file in a group installation, this needs to be done once on each PC.

If you have any trouble with the Web Update function, you can download standalone update files from <http://www.healthbase.com.au/aa/download.htm>. The downloadable files require a password to unzip them – contact us for the relevant passwords.

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7. WHEN TO INSTALL THE UPDATES

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The program update may be installed at any time. For group practices, it is wise to do this on one PC when Access Anaesthetics is closed on all other PCs. After installing the program update, you will need to select a provider when the program first opens. If you are upgrading from a version earlier than 5.0, some changes will be made to the data file structure. To simplify this, click <Select Provider>, then click <Update data version>. This will complete the data structure updates on all the doctors files. Finally, install the update on the other PCs. If you are using Web Update, you only need to open AA on the other PCs and you will be prompted to install the update.

You should only install the Medicare and Health fund files when you have finished creating accounts for procedures done prior to November 2008. Once you have completed all the November accounts, install the latest schedules. Note that you only need to have created the items on the older accounts; you don't need to wait until the accounts are printed or paid.

Once you have updated the fee schedules, all newly entered items will use the November 2008 fee, while existing items will retain their existing fee. No account fees will be changed by installing the update, only newly created items will use the new fees. Note that if items are reinserted onto older accounts, the new fees will be used.

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8. HOW TO REVERT TO AN OLDER FEE SCHEDULE

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Inevitably some clients will need to revert back to an older fee schedule to create accounts or enter items for procedures performed prior to November 2008. To do this you need to separately switch to the appropriate Medicare and Health funds files. To do this, from the Maintenance Menu, click <MBS/RVG Items file> and select the most appropriate items file for the operation date. Then click <Health Fund Fees> and select a file version that was effective at the time of the operation to be managed. Once you have completed creating or editing the items for the older accounts, use the same 2-step process to switch back to the current item and fee schedules.