

Access Anaesthetics Items Update

November 2006

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1. Medicare Benefits Schedule

Basic RVG Unit Value

Unit value increased 35c to \$17.50. The fees for most other items have been increased by approx 2.1%.

New Anaesthesia Consultation Items

There are 10 new items for anaesthesia consultations replacing the deleted item 17603. As well as being time-based, they have additional requirements related to the complexity of surgery, the taking of a detailed history and examination. Item 17680 is for a consultation immediately prior to regional blockade in labour. Item 17690 is a loading to be applied in addition to items 17615-17625 when the pre-anaesthetic consultation is carried out in rooms prior to admission.

Anaesthetists should familiarise themselves with the complete description of these items by reviewing the Nov 2006 Medicare book, or other Medicare or ASA publications. The notes for guidance for anaesthesia consultations in the Medicare book have been extensively revised and should also be reviewed.

| Item | Fee | Abbreviated Description (see Medicare book for full description) |
|-------|--------|--|
| 17610 | 37.95 | Pre-anaesthesia consultation, limited examination, up to 15 minutes |
| 17615 | 75.60 | Pre-anaesthesia consultation, selective history & extensive examination for advanced surgery or complex medical problems, 16 - 30 minutes |
| 17620 | 104.75 | Pre-anaesthesia consultation, detailed history and comprehensive examination for advanced surgery or complex medical problems, 31-45 min |
| 17625 | 133.35 | Pre-anaesthesia consultation, exhaustive history and comprehensive examination for advanced surgery or complex medical problems, over 45 min |
| 17640 | 37.95 | Anaesthetist, referred consultation, limited examination, up to 15 minutes |
| 17645 | 75.60 | Anaesthetist, referred consultation, selective history & extensive examination, 16 - 30 minutes |
| 17650 | 104.75 | Anaesthetist, referred consultation, detailed history & comprehensive examination, 31 - 45 minutes |
| 17655 | 133.35 | Anaesthetist, referred consultation, exhaustive history & comprehensive examination, more than 45 minutes |
| 17680 | 75.60 | Consultation prior to major regional blockade in a patient in labour |
| 17690 | 35.00 | Pre-anaesthesia in-rooms consultation loading (with 17615, 17620 or 17625) |

2. ASA Relative Value Guide

Unit Value

The ASA/AMA recommended maximum RVG unit value from November 2006 has risen by 3.77% to \$62.00. This is the maximum that would be paid by third party and workers compensation insurers.

New items

| Item | Units | Description |
|-------|-------|---|
| CV004 | 8 | Administration of massive blood transfusion in association with anaesthesia |
| CG | 10T | ANAESTHESIA for radical nephrectomy |

Notes These items are not currently part of the Medicare RVG schedule.
Each anaesthetist should determine their own fees for the services they provide.
These rates should be manually updated in AA, Options form > Unit and Time Values.

3. Veterans' Affairs

RVG anaesthesia items will be rebated at \$28.80 per unit, up from \$28.20 last year. This is an increase of approximately 2.1%. Significant additional funding has been obtained for anaesthesia consultations. Increases will be effective from 1 November, but initially only lower interim rebates will be available, with backdated rebates available after May 2007.

The DVA fees are contained in the DVA_RVG schedule that may be selected from the Health Fund drop-down list on the Items page. The old Time-Based DVA tab is no longer applicable.

The DVA_ICU schedule has been removed, as fees for anaesthetists and intensivists are now identical.

4. Private Health Funds

Most fee schedules have been updated. The exceptions are ...

- MBF – normally indexed in Feb; however new items will not be available on website until 2nd week of November .
- StLukes – indexing in December. No information on new items yet.

These will be updated as the information comes to hand.

5. Victorian Workers Compensation

If you use the Victorian Workers Compensation 'Time-engaged' fees, you should also update these. Click Tools > Time-based Fees, and adjust the relevant time rates to those shown below.

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--------|
| Pre-anesthetic consultation | | 89.70 |
| AnInHrs | - for each of the first two 15 minute units (or part thereof) | 97.60 |
| AnInHrs | - for each subsequent 15 minutes (or part thereof) | 60.15 |
| AnOutHrs | - for the first 30 minutes (or part thereof) | 234.60 |
| AnOutHrs | - for each subsequent 30 minutes (or part thereof) | 144.40 |

6. Installation notes

From the website ...

Within Access Anaesthetics, click Maintenance Menu > Web Update > Search for updates. This should identify whether your system is up-to-date and provide a button to download and install if appropriate.

Standalone update files for Medicare and Health Funds are also available on the Access Anaesthetics website at <http://www.healthbase.com.au/aa/download.htm>. A password is required to install these files.

From a disk ...

Insert the disk, open Access Anaesthetics, and click Maintenance Menu > Disk Update. Select the disk location and click review updates. This should identify whether your system is up-to-date and provide a button to install.

How to check if your installation succeeded ...

Items file – click *Maintenance Menu > MBS/RVG Items File* and look at the name of the file listed as the Items file. This should be AALItems2006_Nov.mdb.

Health Funds – click *Maintenance Menu > Health Fund Fees*. The version and date of the file will be shown at the top middle of the screen. The first version released for this update was Ver 6.91, Nov 01. Other versions will follow.

TP/WC rates – check the rates in the Options form on the Unit and Time Values page. These should be \$62/unit.

How to change back to a previous version ...

If you want to create accounts for procedures performed prior to 1 November 2006, do the following. For the Items file, click *Maintenance Menu > MBS/RVG Items File* and select an earlier version of the schedule file. For health funds, click *Maintenance Menu > Health Fund Fees > Change to another fund file version*. Select an earlier health fund fee file. You may change back and forth between the different files at any time. Note that for networked versions, if one user changes the file, this will change it for all users.

For more information see ...

Medicare Benefits Schedule Book November 2006

Medicare website at <http://www9.health.gov.au/mbs/>

ASA website at <http://www.asa.org.au/>

ASA memo to members reproduced with permission at <http://www.healthbase.com.au/downloads/ASAMemoNov2006.htm>