



ShireGPs

# Practice Nurse Incentive Program

**Summary of Key Information  
for Practices**

Sutherland Division of General Practice

July 2011

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# Practice Nurse Incentive Program (PNIP)

## What is the Practice Nurse Incentive Program (PNIP)?

The practice nurse incentive program is due to commence on **January 1<sup>st</sup> 2012**. This program provides incentive payments to practices to support an expanded and enhanced role for nurses working in general practice. In the past, there have been no financial benefits to practices in metropolitan areas that employ or who access the services of a practice nurse. The new program also extends the support beyond practice nurses and also includes:

- Support for all accredited practices to employ an Aboriginal Health Worker instead of or in addition to a practice nurse
- Support for practices in urban areas of workforce shortage to employ an allied health professional (for example – dietitian, physiotherapist) instead of or in addition to a practice nurse and/or aboriginal health worker.

## Changes to the current practice nurse incentives

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2011, the current PIP nurse payment for rural and outer metropolitan areas will cease along with six of the current MBS practice nurse item numbers:

PN Item numbers which will be REMOVED:	PN item numbers which will REMAIN:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10993</li></ul>	10986 – Healthy Kids Check provided by a Practice Nurse or registered Aboriginal health worker
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10994</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10995</li></ul>	10987 – Follow up services provided by a PN or registered Aboriginal health worker for an indigenous person who has received a health assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10996</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10998</li></ul>	10997 – Service provided to a person with a chronic disease by a practice nurse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10999</li></ul>	

## PNIP Payments – Commencing 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012

There are different payment types under the PNIP

### Incentive Payment

The level of incentive payment a general practice will be entitled to is dependent on the practice's Standardised Whole Patient Equivalent (SWPE) value and the hours worked by practice nurses at the practice. Eligible practices will receive:

- \$25 000 per year, per 1000 SWPE where a Registered Nurse or eligible allied health professional works at least 12 hours 40 minutes per week

- \$12 500 per year, per 1000 SWPE where an Enrolled Nurse or eligible aboriginal health worker works at least 12 hours 40 minutes per week.

Incentives will be capped at five per practice. This means that practices will be eligible to receive up to \$125 000 per year to support their practice nurse workforce.

The table below depicts the payment amounts based on a practice SWPE and number of hours required to be worked by a practice nurse for the incentive payments

SWPE	Minimum number of practice nurse hours per week required for full incentive payment	Incentive amount for a Registered Nurse (or allied health professional where applicable)	Incentive amount for an Enrolled Nurse or Aboriginal Health Worker
1000	12 hours 40 mins	\$25,000	\$12,500
2000	25 hours 20 mins	\$50,000	\$25,000
3000	38 hours	\$75,000	\$37,500
4000	50 hours 40 mins	\$100,000	\$50,000
5000	63 hours 20 mins	\$125,000	\$62,500

To be eligible to receive the incentive payment a practice must:

- Meet the RACGP definition of a general practice
- Be accredited or registered for accreditation against the RACGP accreditation standards for general practice and be fully accredited within 12 months of joining the PNIP
- Maintain accreditation.
- Have current public liability insurance
- Make sure all the GPs in the practice have current professional indemnity cover
- Employ or otherwise retain the services of an eligible practice nurse and/or aboriginal health worker and/or allied health professional
- Employ or retain the services of a GP
- Make sure all practice nurses and/or aboriginal health workers and/or allied health professionals are covered by the appropriate professional indemnity insurance arrangements

#### Other payments include:

##### 1. Top-up Payment

Top up payments will be available for accredited practices receiving the incentive payment for the first 3 years of the program (January 2011 – December 2014). This is to make sure that practices are not in any way financially disadvantaged by the removal of the 6 MBS practice nurse item numbers. Medicare will assess if a practice is eligible for a top up payment. In order to be considered for top up payments, practices will be required to provide practice details and give consent for the use of their data to calculate the top up payment. Practices must supply the total contracted hours per week, by health professional type, for each quarter in the 12 month period of the start of August 2010 – the end of July 2011. Practices must also supply GP provider names for all GPs who worked in the practice during this period and GPs must consent for Medicare to use their MBS billing data to determine practice eligibility and payment amounts. Practices have until the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012 to apply

for a top up payment. Eligible practices, will receive their top up payments on a quarterly basis at the same time as the PNIP payments are made.

## **2. Grandparenting Payment**

Grandparenting payments will be available for non-accredited practices that are not eligible for the incentive payment for the first three years of the program – 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014. This is to ensure non accredited practices with a practice nurse will not be financially disadvantaged by the removal of the 6 MBS practice nurse items. The grandparenting payment = income received in preceding year from ceased MBS nurse items. Practices will have until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012 to apply for grandparenting payments and Medicare will assess if a practice is eligible.

## **3. Accreditation Assistance Incentive Payment**

To be eligible for the one off \$5,000 accreditation assistance incentive payment, a practice must be registered for accreditation against the RACGP standards and meet other eligibility requirements. In addition to this, the practice must join the PNIP, provide proof of registration for accreditation and become accredited within 12 months of joining the PNIP.

## **4. Department of Veterans Affairs Loading**

Practices that are eligible for the PNIP and provide GP services to DVA Gold Card Holders will be eligible for a yearly, per veteran payment. This loading is calculated by determining the number of Gold Card holders who receive an 'in rooms' consultation during each year. An amount will be paid for each DVA Gold Card holder, regardless of practice location, nursing qualifications and the number of nurses in the practice. There are no limitations on the number of DVA loadings per practice.

## **Applications**

Practices will be able to apply for the **PNIP from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011** – application forms will be available on the Medicare Australia Website <http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/incentives/pnip.jsp#N10266>. Medicare will advise practices in writing of the receipt of their application. Applications will be assessed for eligibility from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012. If practices prefer to register online, they can do so from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 via the PNIP online system. If choosing this option, details of an authorised contact person from the practice must be included and all correspondence will be made through this nominated person.

## **What practices can do to prepare?**

### **1. Gain accreditation**

If you are not accredited, think about gaining accreditation. With the accreditation assistance incentive payment, there is no better time than now to become accredited! Accreditation allows for practices to access the Australian Governments Practice Incentives Programs (PIP). Accreditation may seem like a complicated and time consuming process, however working through the accreditation process is not as hard as it seems and the benefits are definitely worth it. The accreditation standards for general practice are the minimum required for best practice and most

are probably already being met by your practice. The Division has various different services which can support your practice through the accreditation process.

## 2. Consider employing a practice nurse

A practice nurse is a highly valuable addition to a clinical team. They have a wide scope of practice and can provide valuable support and free up a lot of GP time by assisting with various clinical tasks such as immunisations, triage, chronic disease management, health assessments, contributions to care plans and wound dressings to name a few. For further information about nursing in general practice, visit the Shire GPs website - <http://www.shiregps.org.au/practice-nurse.php>

### PNIP Incentive Payment Ready Reckoner

The Department of Health and Ageing and Medicare Australia have developed the Ready Reckoner which can be used to estimate the incentive amount your practice may be entitled to. This calculator is currently available for use and by inputting your practices details such as SWPE and practice nurse hours, you will be able to get an estimated figure of how much money your practice is entitled to under this incentive. This is available at the following link -

<http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/incentives/pnip/calculator.jsp>

PNIP Incentive Payment Calculator - Ready Reckoner

**Disclaimer:** This tool only provides an estimate of the incentive payment a practice may be eligible for under the Practice Nurse Incentive Program and is provided for your information only. The estimate should not be relied upon as the incentive payment you may be eligible to receive under the Practice Nurse Incentive Program. An accurate assessment can only be made by Medicare Australia through the application process once the program has commenced on 1 January 2012.

\* Denotes mandatory fields

**Practice Profile**

Enter practice SWPE Value or 0

(If you are a PIP practice, your SWPE count will be shown on your last payment advice)

Is your practice less than 18 months old? \*  Yes  No

Default SWPE

Is your practice an AMS or ACCHS? \*  Yes  No

Is your practice UAWS? \*  Yes  No

Remoteness

Based on the Remoteness percentage extra loading applicable

**When entering a practice hours and minutes, it should be entered as a decimal.  
Eg. 15 hours and 30 mins = 15.5 hours.**

**Current Practice Nurse Details (for calculation quarter)**

Registered Nurse (Standard weekly hours)

Enrolled Nurse (Standard weekly hours)

Aboriginal Health Worker (Standard weekly hours)

Allied Health Professional (Standard weekly hours)

**Calculations for Incentive Payments**

New SWPE Value after loadings are applied

Maximum number of Incentives that may apply

Required number of full time Practice Nurses to be eligible for maximum number of Incentives

Currently employed full time Practice Nurses at the practice

Actual number of Incentives that practices is eligible for

RN/HP Proportion

EN/HP Proportion

**Results**

Estimated Total PNIP Incentive Payment (per annum)

Estimated Remoteness Loading

Estimated Quarterly Amount Payable (for Incentive Payment)

## Further Information

For further information about the PNIP and a full copy of the program guidelines see the following links:

Medicare Australia Practice Nurse Incentive Program Information Page

<http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/pnip>

Department of Health and Ageing – Practice Nurse Incentive Program Guidelines

[http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/incentives/files/pnip\\_guidelines\\_1106.pdf](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/incentives/files/pnip_guidelines_1106.pdf) . These guidelines contain a number of different scenarios involving the different incentive types and practice sizes, location, type of employees (e.g. allied health / aboriginal health workers) which can help practices understand the different incentives they are entitled to under the program.

Medicare Australia PNIP Information

- Phone: 1800 222 032
- Email: [pnip@medicareaustralia.gov.au](mailto:pnip@medicareaustralia.gov.au)

## Accreditation Information

Australian General Practice Accreditation Ltd (AGPAL)

- Phone: 1300 362 111
- Website: <http://www.agpal.com.au/>

General Practice Accreditation plus (GPA)

- Phone: 1800 188 088
- Website: <http://www.gpa.net.au/>

Sutherland Division of GeneraShire GPs

- Contact: Amy Young (General Practice Support Program)
- Phone: 9545 3533
- Email: [ayoung@shiregps.org.au](mailto:ayoung@shiregps.org.au)
- Website: <http://www.shiregps.org.au/accreditation.php>