



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

DVA Community Nursing Program
Bulletin No 10
December 2018

Please ensure that all relevant staff in your organisation receive this Bulletin.

Changes to the Community Nursing Schedule of Fees

Changes are being made to DVA's Community Nursing Schedule of Fees, for services provided on or after 1 January 2019. Several new item categories will be introduced to the standard Schedule of Fees, removing the need to apply through the Exceptional Case Unit (ECU) process (seek prior approval) for these items.

Prior approval requirements for two items – additional travel and extensions to exceptional case status – will also be changed.

The Notes for Community Nursing Providers (Notes) are being updated to take account of these changes, and will take effect from 1 January 2019. The updated Notes will be made available in December 2018, and will be on the DVA website and Austender.

In addition, the annual indexation of rates will take effect from 1 January 2019. The updated Schedule of Fees will be published on the DVA website and Austender.

All items in the Schedule of Fees are subject to post payment monitoring by the Department.

New Items

New items being introduced are:

- Overnight care (clinical and personal), for active and non-active care;
- Three times daily (TDS) visits;
- Second workers add-on items; and
- Additional Nursing Consumables item numbers.

While these items can currently be claimed by seeking prior approval through the ECU, by introducing new item numbers into the Schedule of Fees, from 1 January 2019 these items can be claimed through Medicare using the normal claiming process.

Overnight Clinical and Personal Care, for Active and Non-active Care (*Section 7.6.3 in the Notes*)

A new hourly rate for the provision of overnight care will be added to the Schedule of Fees. There will be four new item codes:

- Active Clinical Care
- Inactive Clinical Care

- Active Personal Care
- Inactive Personal Care

When claiming overnight care, multiply the hourly rate by the number of hours worked for each shift that overnight care was provided, using the appropriate item. Where there is a mix of care provided, use the majority of care principle. Definitions of Active and Inactive Care are available in the Notes.

The introduction of these item numbers will remove the need to seek prior approval for overnight palliative care using item number NO66.

Three Times Daily (TDS) Visits (*Section 7.5 in the Notes*)

A series of TDS item numbers will be introduced. This is a single series of items, using a single fee to take account of the mix of personal and clinical care services that may be provided TDS.

The TDS items will work in a similar way to the current Core Schedule item numbers. Where there is a mix of Core Clinical / Personal and TDS visits over a 28-day claim period, the Core Clinical / Personal and TDS item numbers will need to be determined based on the number of visits in each category. TDS *cannot* be claimed for the same days that clinical or personal care core items are claimed. Personal and Clinical Add-Ons cannot be claimed with TDS care.

The introduction of TDS item numbers will remove the need to apply for TDS care through exceptional case status (NO65).

Second Workers Add-ons (*Section 7.6.4 in the Notes*)

New add-on item numbers are being introduced for second worker visits. There will be two series of item numbers, one for clinical care second worker visits and one for personal care second worker visits.

The Second Worker item number will work in a similar way to current add-on items, and can be claimed with Core, TDS and overnight items. If required, it can also be used in conjunction with approved exceptional case status.

These new item numbers will replace the need to seek prior approval for second worker visits through the ECU item number NO68.

Additional Nursing Consumables Item Numbers (*Section 7.7 in the Notes*)

In addition to the above new items being introduced into the Schedule of Fees, the upper limit for nursing consumables that can be claimed through the Schedule is being increased from \$500 to \$1,000, with ten new nursing consumable item numbers added to the Schedule of Fees.

Existing rules relating to consumables items will apply to the new items.

All reimbursements for entitled persons whose consumables total cost exceeds \$1,000 (exclusive of GST) in a 28-day claim period will need to be claimed via the ECU by completing the following form:

[Exceptional Case Unit Request for Funding of Nursing Consumables over \\$1,000 \(D9297\)](#)

Changes to Prior Approvals

In addition to the new items being introduced into the Schedule of Fees, the following prior approval requirements are being changed:

- the requirement to submit prior approval requests when claiming additional travel is being removed; and
- extensions to prior approval requests will not need to be submitted for approval.

Additional Travel (*Attachment B in the Notes*)

The requirement to seek prior approval for additional travel is being removed, and this item will be moved to the Schedule of Fees. The only change to this item is that it will no longer require prior approval, with existing rules around additional travel and the item number NA10 remaining the same. It will be paid at the standard kilometre rate after the first 20 kilometres.

Extension to Prior Approval Requests and Variations (*Attachment A Sections 1.4 and 1.5 in the Notes*)

The requirement to submit requests for extensions to already approved prior approval requests for exceptional case status will be removed. These requests will no longer need to be resubmitted to the ECU for re-approval when an extension is required.

When there is a variation to care or when a client stops receiving care under exceptional case status for seven consecutive days in a 28 day claim period, this will still need to be advised to the ECU. The appropriate form is available on DVA's website at <https://www.dva.gov.au/providers/community-nursing/exceptional-case-unit>

Indexation

In addition to the changes outlined above, the annual fee indexation has been applied to existing fees. This will take effect from 1 January 2019.

New Resources

New Personal Care Worker (NSS) and Administrative Claiming resources are being developed. These will be made available on the Community Nursing page of the DVA website in December 2018 for comment and feedback from Community Nursing provider staff. The consultation period will run until 31 January 2019, with feedback to be provided via the link that will be available on the DVA website.

Update to Personal Care – Out of Scope Section in the Notes

Section 7.4.3 – *Personal Care – Out of Scope* has been updated in the Notes. The changes reflect the importance of nutrition and hygiene to a person's clinical outcomes and overall health and wellbeing.

Have your Organisation's Details Changed?

If you have any changes to the email contact for your organisation's receipt of CN Bulletins, please email the DVA Community Nursing Contract Mailbox: NMBCN@dva.gov.au.

Questions?

If you have any questions about the content of this Bulletin, please email DVA at nursing@dva.gov.au

Periodically, Q&As will be added to the Community Nursing page of the DVA website to address frequently asked questions.

DVA closed between Christmas and New Year

The Department of Veterans' Affairs offices including the Exceptional Case Unit, will be closed from 5pm Friday 21 December 2018 reopening 8.30am Wednesday 2 January 2019.