

Group Exercise Programs under Medicare for Patients with Type 2 Diabetes

What is a group exercise program?

Until now there have been very few Medicare group services available in the Nepean and Blue Mountains areas. The Diabetes Integration Project has worked with local Exercise Physiologists to establish group exercise programs that you can refer your patients to. These programs are designed to provide patients with the knowledge, motivation and practical skills to make sustainable lifestyle changes to better manage their diabetes. The programs are delivered by Exercise Physiologists and may include sessions with Dietitians or Diabetes Educators.

Which patients are eligible?

Patients with type 2 diabetes who have a GP Management Plan - item 721 (or a review item 732) are eligible for referral to a group exercise program. An eligible patient is entitled to 1 individual assessment and 8 group sessions per calendar year.

Is there an age restriction?

No. Any patient with type 2 diabetes and a current GP Management Plan is eligible.

Is this in addition to the 5 individual allied health services per calendar year?

Yes. Eligible patients can access both the 8 group services and the 5 individual services per calendar year. (Note that a Team Care Arrangement - item 723, is required for referral to individual services.)

Will I get a report from the allied health provider?

The allied health provider will provide a written report following the individual assessment and another on completion of the group program, indicating the nature of the services provided, patient attendance and outcomes achieved.

How much will a group exercise program cost my patients?

Allied health providers are free to determine their own fees, however many have chosen to bulk bill. The service directory indicates which programs are bulk billed and any additional costs.

Is there a Medicare item or a schedule fee for referring patients to group exercise programs?

No, however the creation or review of a GP Management Plan attracts a 100% rebate of the schedule fee.

What programs are running in my area?

The service directory can be faxed or sent to you on request. It is also available on the Nepean Division's website at www.nepeandpg.org.au

Where do I find a referral form?

Referral form "Allied Health Group Services under Medicare for patients with type 2 diabetes" can be downloaded from the Department of Health and Ageing's website at www.health.gov.au/epc or the Nepean Division's website at www.nepeandpg.org.au

How do I refer a patient with type 2 diabetes to a group exercise program?

1. Create a GP Management Plan or review their existing plan if it is due for review (6 monthly).
2. Review the Service Directory and discuss which program is most suitable for your patient.
3. Complete the referral form and hand it to the patient along with their Management Plan and a patient brochure.
4. Send a copy of the referral form and the Management Plan to the Exercise Physiologist. See the Service Directory for contact details.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL THE NEPEAN DIVISION OF GENERAL PRACTICE ON 4721 1150