



RACGP

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

Healthy Profession.
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30 November 2018

Professor Bruce Robinson
Chair, MBS Review Taskforce
MBSReviews@health.gov.au

Dear Professor Robinson,

Re: MBS Review Taskforce – Orthopaedic clinical committee report, 2017

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) thanks the MBS Review Taskforce for the opportunity to comment on the Orthopaedic clinical committee report, 2017.

The RACGP wishes to acknowledge the enormity of the undertaking and the comprehensiveness of the review. The RACGP provides general comments.

Changes to item descriptors

The changes to item descriptors aim to prevent inappropriate co-claiming. The RACGP supports measures that aim to reduce variation in how doctors claim for the same procedure. The RACGP suggests adequate monitoring be in place to ensure patients are not charged unwarranted gap payments.

The RACGP welcomes the change where knee arthroscopy items should not be used in uncomplicated arthritis. This is supported in the RACGP's recently released [Guideline for the management of knee and hip osteoarthritis](#).

The RACGP supports reintroduction of items for unguided joint or bursar injection or aspiration procedures which should improve patient accessibility and reduce overall Medicare costs.

Patient accessibility

Changes to aftercare e.g. septic arthritis which requires careful and prolonged aftercare, may result in obstacles for patients in remote areas not able to access orthopaedic surgeons. The RACGP suggests that provisions should be made for GPs to bill for such aftercare.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide feedback. We look forward to hearing about this Review's progress and outcomes. For any queries on the RACGP's submission, please contact Mr Stephan Groombridge, Manager, e-health and Quality Care at (03) 8699 0544 or stephan.groombridge@racgp.org.au

Yours sincerely

Dr Harry Nespolon
President