

Application for recognition as a Specialist or Consultant Physician

Information sheet

Purpose of this form

Complete this form if you:

- are an Australian citizen, permanent resident, a temporary resident, or a New Zealand citizen, **and**
- are a registered medical practitioner, **and**
- are or will be working as a specialist or consultant physician, **and**
- want to provide services to private patients that attract Medicare benefits at the specialist or consultant physician rates.

Before applying for recognition as a specialist or consultant physician, you must:

- be registered to practise as a specialist in your specialty with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) or have Australasian Specialist Medical College Fellowship and status as a Fellow of an Australasian Specialist Medical College in relation to the specialty, **and**
- have applied for a Medicare provider number for the specific practice location(s) at which you will render services.

Are you applying for recognition as a specialist or consultant physician?

To be eligible for recognition as a specialist, you should:

- be registered with the AHPRA to practise as a specialist in the relevant specialty or hold Fellowship and status as a Fellow of the relevant Australasian Specialist Medical College in the specialty. Recognition can only be granted for those medical specialties listed in Schedule 4 of the Health Insurance Regulations.

To be eligible for recognition as a consultant physician, you should:

- be registered with the AHPRA to practise as a specialist in a sub-speciality of general medicine, psychiatry or rehabilitation medicine. Recognised sub-specialties general medicine are listed in Schedule 4 of the Health Insurance Regulations, **or**
- hold Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians or Fellowship of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists and have status as a Fellow of the relevant College in relation to the specialty.

Schedule 4 of the Health Insurance Regulations is available at comlaw.gov.au

Recognition in Intensive Care or Nuclear Medicine

If you are applying for recognition as a consultant physician in intensive care or nuclear medicine and do not hold the Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians but have Australian medical board registration to work in the specialty, you must have been assessed by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians.

If you were assessed by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists, the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists or the Joint Faculty of Intensive Care, you are only eligible to apply for recognition as a specialist.

Please note that specialist recognition does not make you eligible to access Medicare benefits for Nuclear Medicine Imaging Items (Group 14 items of the Medicare Benefits Schedule). To be able to access these items you must also be credentialled by the Joint Nuclear Medicine Credentialling and Accreditation Committee (JNMCAC) of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists.

The JNMCAC secretariat will advise the Australian Government Department of Human Services when your name has been included on the Register of Credentialled Nuclear Medicine Specialists. Upon receipt of this advice the Department of Human Services will update your Medicare Benefits for Nuclear Medicine Imaging services.

If you have any questions regarding the credentialling process, you should contact the JNMCAC Secretariat on (02) 9818 4824.

MRI Services

Specialist recognition in the specialty of Diagnostic Radiology does not automatically render you eligible to attract a Medicare benefit for any MRI services you may perform. To be able to attract Medicare rebates for MRI services, the diagnostic imaging practice where you will be performing MRI services, will need to add you to their Location Specific Practice Number by submitting a **Request to amend Location Specific Practice Number** form.

When should I start issuing accounts or submitting bulk bill claims for Medicare rebates?

Not until you receive written notice from the Department of Human Services. The start date from which your services will attract a Medicare rebate will be shown in the letter.

Recognition as a specialist or consultant physician does not automatically provide you with access to Medicare benefits, you may have restricted access to Medicare billing because your primary qualification was obtained overseas or you are a former overseas medical student and you need an exemption approved under section 19AB of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* to attract Medicare benefits for your services.

The *Health Insurance Act 1973* is available at comlaw.gov.au

When will I be required to provide supplementary information from the Medical Registration Board?

If you are not a fellow of an Australasian Specialist Medical College or do not hold the relevant qualification (that is Fellowship of the Australasian Specialist College as listed in Schedule 4 of the Health Insurance Regulations) and have not successfully completed training in the specialty which is recognised by the College, or your medical registration certificate(s) does not provide details of the specialty, time-period and specific location (if limitations exist) in which you are registered to practise, then you must attach to your application, written advice from the AHPRA, which clearly states these details. AHPRA should forward this to you along with your certificate. If not, please contact AHPRA to obtain a copy before submitting your application for recognition.

What date will my specialist recognition take effect?

The delegate of the Chief Executive Medicare, on behalf of the Minister for Health, will write to you advising the outcome of your application. This will include the date of recognition if your application is approved. The delegate may also consider requests to have recognition commence from an earlier date if you satisfied the criteria for recognition at that time.

Will my specialist recognition be time-defined?

If you are an Australian citizen/permanent resident, you may be granted recognition as a specialist or consultant physician without any time limitation if you hold the specified Australasian qualification and have status as a Fellow of the relevant College in relation to the specialty. If you are a temporary resident and you have obtained the specified Australasian qualification and have status as a Fellow of the relevant College in relation to the specialty you may be granted recognition as a specialist or consultant physician without an end date, however, this recognition will end when you become an Australian citizen/permanent resident. You will need to reapply for recognition at this time.

If you do not hold the specified Australasian qualification and do not have status as a Fellow of the relevant College you will be granted recognition as a specialist or consultant physician for a limited time period.

You may have restricted access to Medicare billing because your primary qualification was obtained overseas or you are a former overseas medical student and you need an exemption approved under section 19AB of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* to attract Medicare benefits for your services.

How should I renew my recognition as a specialist or consultant physician?

If your recognition is time defined you will have to submit a new application and pay the application fee. You must ensure that your new application is made in a timely manner to ensure there is no gap in your Medicare eligibility. Medicare will not send you a reminder letter prior to the expiration of your recognition.

What if I am recognised when I am a temporary resident and I become an Australian citizen/permanent resident?

If you become an Australian citizen/permanent resident, you will need to submit a new application for recognition as a specialist or consultant physician because different sections of the legislation apply. These new applications will be considered by the delegate of the Chief Executive Medicare, on behalf of the Minister of Health, under section 3DB of the *Health Insurance Act 1973*. You will be required to pay the application fee.

Before sending this application form please ensure that you have included:

- a copy of your current AHPRA certificate(s), **and**
- a copy of a letter from the AHPRA specifying that you are registered to work as a specialist in the nominated specialty and the time period for which registration has been granted if this information is not specified on the Medical Registration certificate, **or**
- a copy of your Australasian Specialist Medical College Fellowship certificate and a copy of your status as a Fellow of the relevant Australasian Specialist Medical College in relation to the specialty, **and**
- copies of relevant pages of passport showing personal details and the Australian visa stamp, if applicable (this is necessary if you are a temporary resident or your residency status has changed), **and**
- an application fee of A\$30.00 (cheque or money order made payable to the Department of Human Services).

Filling in this form

- **Please use black or blue pen**
- Print in BLOCK LETTERS
- Mark boxes like this with a ✓ or X

Returning your form

Check that you have answered all the questions you need to answer and that you have signed and dated this form.

Send the completed form to:

**Specialist Recognition
Provider Eligibility Section
PO Box 1001
TUGGERANONG DC ACT 2901**

Faxed copies of the application form will not be accepted as the \$30.00 application fee should accompany this form.

When a complete application is received, including all supporting documentation and payment of the application fee, we will endeavour to process your application within 28 days of receipt.

Application fee: by cheque or money order made payable to the Department of Human Services. Do not send cash.

Enquiries: Telephone **(02) 6143 8157**

Email: **srac@humanservices.gov.au**

Please note:

- Your application and supporting documentation should be sent to the Department of Human Services prior to your proposed commencement date.
- You should not commence billing until the Department of Human Services has advised you in writing that your recognition has been approved.
- This information sheet and form is available on our website **humanservices.gov.au**

Specialty(ies) in which recognition is sought

12 In what specialty(ies) do you wish to be recognised?

You can only be recognised in the specialty(ies) in which you are currently registered or hold the appropriate qualification and have satisfactorily completed training in the specialty as recognised by the relevant Australasian Specialist Medical College.

You may apply for specialist recognition for Medicare purposes in the specialty(ies) listed in Schedule 4 of the Health Insurance Regulations.

13 Preferred date of recognition

This date will be taken into consideration when determining commencement date of recognition.

Restrictions on accessing Medicare

14 Are you:

- an overseas trained doctor (your primary medical qualification was obtained at a medical school outside Australia) who first held Australian Medical Board registration on or after 1 January 1997, **or**
- a former overseas medical student (your primary medical qualification was obtained from a medical school located in Australia and you were a temporary resident when you commenced study) who first held Australian Medical Board registration on or after 1 January 1997.

No

Yes

You are subject to restrictions on accessing Medicare benefits for a period of at least ten years. To access Medicare benefits you will need to apply for a section 19AB exemption. Applications for 19AB exemptions are made through the Department of Human Services to the Department of Health. You should complete an application for a 'Medicare provider number for a medical practitioner' and forward it to the Department of Human Services Provider Registration Section or email to provider.registration@humanservices.gov.au

Application fee

15 An application fee of \$30.00 applies. Your application is incomplete if you do not pay this fee and will not be processed until payment is received. Payment will be accepted by cheque or money order made payable to the Department of Human Services.

Privacy notice

16 Your personal information is protected by law, including the *Privacy Act 1988*, and is collected by the Australian Government Department of Human Services for the assessment and administration of payments and services. This information is required to process your application or claim.

Your information may be used by the department or given to other parties for the purposes of research, investigation or where you have agreed or it is required or authorised by law.

You can get more information about the way in which the Department of Human Services will manage your personal information, including our privacy policy at humanservices.gov.au/privacy or by requesting a copy from the department.

Declaration

17 I declare that:

- the information I have provided in this form is complete and correct.
- I am working, or will be commencing work, as a specialist or consultant physician in a private medical practice or have rights to private practice with a hospital.

I understand that:

- the Australian Government Department of Human Services may contact the relevant Specialist Medical College(s), the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Authority (AHPRA) or my employer in relation to this application.
- giving false or misleading information is a serious offence.

Applicant's signature

Date

Checklist

18 Which of the following forms, documents and other attachments are you providing with this form?

If you are not sure, check the question to see if you should attach the documents.

Copy of your AHPRA certificate confirmation
(at **question 9**)

Copy of your letter or certificate of confirmation
as a fellow
(at **questions 10 and 11**)

Payment of Application fee
(at **question 15**)