



## Medicare Health Checks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

### Fact Sheet

This Fact Sheet must be read in conjunction with the item descriptor and explanatory notes for Items 704 – 710 (as set out in the Medicare Benefits Schedule Book).

These health checks are Medicare services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The aim of the health checks is to help ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receive primary health care matched to their needs, by encouraging early detection, diagnosis and intervention for common and treatable conditions that cause considerable morbidity and early mortality.

For the purpose of the health checks, a person is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person if they, or their parent or carer, identify them as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

#### Child Health Check (0-14)

The Child Health Check is an annual service for children 0 to 14 years (inclusive). The minimum time allowed between health checks is 9 months. This allows flexibility during important life stages for children (such as the first few years of life), when more frequent health assessment activities are clinically indicated.

#### Adult Health Check (15-54)

The Adult Health Check is a two-yearly service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged between 15 and 54 years (inclusive). The minimum time allowed between health checks is 18 months. This allows more flexibility for very remote communities, where GP visits may be less frequent and may make it difficult to follow a consistent schedule of health checks.

#### Older Person's Health Check (55+)

An annual health check is also available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are at least 55 years of age.

Child Health Check	Annual
Adult Health Check	Biennial
Older Person's Health Check	Annual

#### The Assessment

A health check includes an assessment of the patient's health and their physical, psychological and social wellbeing. It also assesses what preventive health care, education and other assistance should be offered to the patient to improve their health and wellbeing. It complements existing services already undertaken by a range of care providers, particularly in the first year of life.



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The patient's 'usual doctor' should normally decide whether a patient should be offered a health check and undertakes the medical parts of the check, after the patient, or their parent or carer, has been given an explanation about what is involved and has given their consent.

Under supervision of the GP, an Aboriginal Health Worker, nurse or other qualified health professional can assist the GP in the information collection stage of the child or adult health check.

### **The health check must include:**

- taking the patient's medical history;
- examining the patient;
- undertaking or arranging any required investigations;
- assessing the patient, using the information gained in the health check;
- making or arranging any necessary interventions and referrals; and
- documenting a simple strategy for the good health of the patient.

The simple strategy for good health should identify any services the patient needs and the actions the patient, or parent or carer, should take. It should be developed in collaboration with the patient, or parent or carer, and documented in the written report on the check that is offered to the patient.

The Medicare Benefits Schedule explanatory notes identify the components that should be included in the patient history, matters to consider in the examination and some intervention options.

**This material is only a summary and must be read in conjunction with the Medicare Benefits Schedule Book.**

For more information visit the Department of Health and Ageing's website at [www.health.gov.au/epc](http://www.health.gov.au/epc) or phone the Medicare Australia provider enquiry line on 132 150.

