



RACGP

Royal Australian College of General Practitioners

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8 March 2019

Mr Isaac Hudson
Specialist Services Section
Medical Policy and Specialist Services Branch
Medical Benefits Division, Department of Health
Via email: hta@health.gov.au

Dear Mr Hudson,

Re: Consultation on the Medical Services Advisory Committee Application 1572 – Diagnosis of hypertension ambulatory blood pressure monitoring in patients with clinic blood pressure \geq 140/90mmHg and \leq 180/110mmHg.

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) thanks the Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC) for the opportunity to provide comment on the Consultation for MSAC application 1572.

RACGP recommendation

The RACGP agrees that a Medicare item number for ambulatory blood pressure monitoring would be utilised by general practitioners.

1. The RACGP's [*Guidelines for preventive activities in general practice 9th ed*](#) (the Red book) recommends the use of ambulatory blood pressure monitoring¹. Measurements over a 24-hour period provide greater insight for general practitioners, and ensures that patients are not unnecessarily prescribed blood pressure medications.
2. A Medicare item number would also benefit patients, who are currently charged a fee for ambulatory blood pressure monitoring. This upfront cost may be a barrier to some patients, particularly those from vulnerable or low socioeconomic backgrounds, who may consequently postpone monitoring due to the expense.
3. A new Medicare item number will encourage GPs to purchase the necessary equipment, ensuring testing will be available to all patients.

The RACGP thanks MSAC again for the opportunity to comment. For further queries please contact Mr Stephan Groombridge, Manager, eHealth & Quality Care at (03) 8699 0544 or stephan.groombridge@racgp.org.au

Yours sincerely

Dr Harry Nespolon
President