



Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) item 45658 factsheet

Last updated: 12 February 2021

What are the changes?

From 1 March 2021, a new MBS item 45658 for the surgical correction of congenital ear deformities if the deformity has been clinically diagnosed as a constricted ear, Stahl's ear, or a similar congenital deformity unrelated to prominent ear, will commence.

Why are the changes being made?

On 1 November 2018, an amendment occurred to item 45659, surgical correction of a congenital deformity of the ear if the deformity is characterised by an absence of the antihelical fold and/or large scapha and/or large concha in patients less than 18 years of age. Following this amendment, the clinical profession informed the Department of Health that changes to the item descriptor unintentionally resulted in the exclusion of a small population of patients from the service. This is contrary to the intent of the amendment of item 45659 which was to prevent claiming for cosmetic purposes and to clarify appropriate clinical indications for the item's use.

To mitigate the unintended restriction in patient access to item 45659, a new item 45658 is being introduced for patients of any age with specific congenital ear deformities.

What does this mean for providers?

Providers can access item 45658 when performing corrective surgery on patients of any age with a congenital ear deformity not related to a prominent ear and which has been identified as a constricted ear, Stahl's ear, or a similar congenital deformity. Providers can continue to claim item 45659 for other specific congenital ear deformities in patients less than 18 years of age.

How will these changes affect patients?

Patients of any age with congenital ear deformities that meet the descriptor of item 45659 may now receive Medicare rebates for a service to correct the deformity.

Who was consulted on the changes?

Consultation was undertaken with the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons who were supportive of the change.

How will the changes be monitored and reviewed?

MBS item 45658 will be subject to MBS compliance processes and activities, including random and targeted audits which may require a provider to submit evidence about the services claimed.



Significant variation from forecasted expenditure may warrant review and amendment of fees, and incorrect use of MBS items can result in penalties including the health professional being asked to repay monies that have been incorrectly received.

Where can I find more information?

The current item descriptors and information on other changes to the MBS can be found on the MBS Online website at www.mbsonline.gov.au. You can also subscribe to future MBS updates by visiting [MBS Online](#) and clicking 'Subscribe'.

The Department of Health provides an email advice service for providers seeking advice on interpretation of the MBS items and rules and the Health Insurance Act and associated regulations. If you have a query relating exclusively to interpretation of the Schedule, you should email askMBS@health.gov.au.

Subscribe to '[News for Health Professionals](#)' on the Services Australia website and you will receive regular news highlights.

If you are seeking advice in relation to Medicare billing, claiming, payments, or obtaining a provider number, please go to the Health Professionals page on the Services Australia website or contact Services Australia on the Provider Enquiry Line – 13 21 50.

The data file for software vendors and can be accessed via the MBS Online website under the [Downloads](#) page.

Please note that the information provided is a general guide only. It is ultimately the responsibility of treating practitioners to use their professional judgment to determine the most clinically appropriate services to provide, and then to ensure that any services billed to Medicare fully meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the legislation.

This sheet is current as of the Last updated date shown above, and does not account for MBS changes since that date.

New item descriptor details

45658 item descriptor

Correction of a congenital deformity of the ear if:

- (a) the congenital deformity is not related to a prominent ear; and
- (b) the deformity has been clinically diagnosed as a constricted ear, Stahl's ear, or a similar congenital deformity; and
- (c) photographic evidence demonstrating the clinical need for this service is documented in the patient notes.

Multiple Operation Rule

(Anaes.) (Assist.)

Fee: \$537.55 **Benefit:** 75% = \$403.20