



## IMPORTANT UPDATE TO MBS ITEMS 39018, 39109 and 39113 FOR NEUROSURGERY SERVICES

**What?** On 1 January 2021, the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) was amended to allow claiming of assist with neurosurgery items 39018, 39109 and 39113.

- **39018** - Cerebrospinal reservoir, ventricular reservoir or external ventricular drain, insertion of, with or without stereotaxy (Anaes.) (*Assist*)
- **39109** Trigeminal gangliotomy by radiofrequency, balloon or glycerol, including stereotaxy (Anaes.) (*Assist*), and
- **39113** Cranial nerve, neurectomy or intracranial decompression of, using microsurgical techniques, including stereotaxy and cranioplasty (Anaes.) (*Assist*)

**Why?** The procedures described in these MBS items may involve a surgical assistant, however an assist could not be claimed previously with these items. The change allows for an assist benefit to be paid, and brings the items in line with other neurosurgery items that include assist. The exclusion of an assist for these items is an unintended consequence of changes to MBS items for neurosurgery and neurology implemented on 1 November 2020.

Please note that reimbursement of assist equivalent funds for these services may be available via an Act of Grace payment. [Information on Act of Grace payments](#), including application form, can be found on the [Department of Finance website](#) under 'Individuals', or by searching for 'Act of Grace'. Please note that Act of Grace payments are discretionary and reimbursement is not guaranteed. Patients are strongly encouraged to discuss options with their provider prior to surgery.

**Who?** The 1 January 2021 amendment benefits patients undergoing the procedures outlined in these MBS items by increasing the available benefit for these procedures. The changes also benefit providers and private health insurers.

**When?** The changes to MBS items for neurosurgery and neurology services were implemented on 1 January 2021. These changes are subject to legislative processes.



### Where can I find more information?

Further information on these changes will be provided as the details are confirmed.

To find out more or subscribe for updates visit [www.mbsonline.gov.au](http://www.mbsonline.gov.au).