



4 Year Old Health Check MBS Item 709 & 711

Key Points

- All 4 year old children who have been, or are ready to be immunised eligible
- Immunise child or record completion of immunisations
- Identify children with any health issue
- Refer children with health issue onto appropriate specialist
- Provide parents with information about healthy habits for children
- 709 Dr MBS item - \$45
- 711 RN MBS item - \$45

Resources

- [Items 709 and 711 Fact Sheet](#)
- [Items 709 and 711 Questions and Answers](#)
- [Items 709 and 711 Checklist](#)
- Get Set 4 Life Healthy Habits for Kids guide – download from link below or email: resourceskits@health.gov.au.

Please note: that the Department of Health and Ageing have advised that they will be sending practices the 'Get set 4 Life – habits for healthy kids guide' directly. If practice nurses or GPs wish to undertake the Healthy Kids Check and do not yet have copies of the guide the check can still be undertaken and a copy of the guide provided to the patients parent or guardian at a later date.

For further resources visit the Department of Health and Ageing website.
[Department of Health and Ageing - Healthy Kids Check](#)

For more information or support in relation in Items 709 and 711 please contact the program support staff at Dandenong Casey General Practice Association on 9706 7311

Fact Sheet

This Fact Sheet must be read in conjunction with the item descriptor and explanatory notes for Items 709 and 711 (as set out in the Medicare Benefits Schedule).

The Healthy Kids Check items 709 and 711 have been introduced for all four year old children who are permanently resident in Australia or who are covered by a Reciprocal Health Care Agreement.

The aim of the Healthy Kids Check is to ensure every four year old child in Australia has a basic health check to see if they are healthy, fit and ready to learn when they start school. The Healthy Kids Check will promote early detection of lifestyle risk factors, delayed development and illness, and introduce guidance for healthy lifestyles and early intervention strategies. The Healthy Kids Check will take place at or around the same time as the four year old immunisation.

The Health Assessment

The health assessment must include each of the following components.

Information collection

The information collection component may be rendered by a nurse or other qualified health professional in accordance with accepted medical practice. Information collection must include taking a patient history (if one does not already exist) or updating an existing record. The patient record must include family and environmental factors, medical and social history, and lifestyle risk factors. Investigations should be undertaken or arranged as clinically indicated in accordance with relevant guidelines.

Assessment

The Healthy Kids Check must include an assessment of the patient's health, based on the patient history, examinations and the results of any investigations. Parents/guardians should also be encouraged to provide relevant information.

Interventions

Where appropriate, arrangements need to be put in place for referrals and follow-up of any problems identified.

Health advice

Health advice and information must be provided to the patient's parent/guardian, utilising the Department's publication **Get Set 4 Life – habits for healthy kids** and other relevant information (such as a parent-held child health record).



Medicare Healthy Kids Check

MBS Items 709 and 711

Immunisation

The Healthy Kids Check is to be delivered in conjunction with the four year old immunisation. The health professional is to gain consent prior to providing the 4 year old immunisation or document evidence that immunisation has previously been given.

Eligible Practitioners

General Practitioner (GP)

The Healthy Kids Check should generally be undertaken by the patient's 'usual doctor', that is, the GP (or a GP in the same practice) who has provided the majority of services to the patient in the past 12 months, and/or is likely to provide the majority of services in the following 12 months.

Responsibilities of the General Practitioner

- If the practice nurse identifies any health concerns, the patient must be reviewed by the patient's 'usual doctor' who will arrange referrals and follow-up as required.
- Provide or document evidence of four year old immunisation has been given.
- Provide and document that a copy of the Department's publication **Get Set 4 Life – habits for healthy kids** has been given.

Practice Nurse (PN)

The Healthy Kids Check can also be undertaken by a practice nurse. The practice nurse is a registered or enrolled nurse who is employed by, or whose services are otherwise retained by, the same practice as the patient's 'usual doctor'.

Responsibilities of the Practice Nurse

- If the practice nurse identifies any health concerns, the patient must be reviewed by the patient's 'usual doctor' who will arrange referrals and follow-up as required.
- Provide or document evidence of four year old immunisation has been given.
- Provide and document that a copy of the Department's publication **Get Set 4 Life – habits for healthy kids** has been given.

Should a medical practitioner other than the patient's 'usual doctor' or practice nurse undertake the Healthy Kids Check, a copy of the health check record should be forwarded to the patient's 'usual doctor' or practice (subject to the agreement of the patient's parent/guardian).



Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service or State/Territory government health clinic

Where an exemption under subsection 19(2) of the Health Insurance Act 1973 has been granted to an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service or State/Territory government health clinic, items 709 and 711 can be claimed for services provided by medical practitioners or nurses salaried by or contracted to, the Service or health clinic.

Medicare Rebate

A Medicare rebate is payable for either item 709 or 711 once only for any eligible patient. If a general practitioner or practice nurse is unsure whether a patient has already received a health assessment under items 709 or 711, he/she may call Medicare Australia, with the patient present, on 132 011.

Guidelines and Resources

There are a number of resources available which may be of assistance. Some of these include the LEA Children's Chart for checking eyesight and Lift the Lip for checking teeth and gums.

Further Information

For Medicare claiming and payment queries, call the Medicare Australia provider enquiry line on 132 150.

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

Questions and Answers

The questions and answers must be read in conjunction with the item descriptor and explanatory notes for Items 709 and 711 (as set out in the Medicare Benefits Schedule).

Who is eligible for this item?

The Healthy Kids Check has been introduced for all four year old children who are permanently resident in Australia or who are covered by a Reciprocal Health Care Agreement. It is to be delivered in conjunction with the four year old immunisation. In some States and Territories, the four year old immunisation is provided at 3 1/2 years. Children receiving this earlier immunisation will be eligible for the Healthy Kids Check if they are over the age of three years and six months and under the age of five years.

What is the purpose of the Healthy Kids Check?

The purpose of the Healthy Kids Check is to ensure every four year old child in Australia has a basic health check to see if they are healthy, fit and ready to learn when they start school.

Who can provide the Healthy Kids Check?

The Healthy Kids Check can be undertaken by a medical practitioner, including a GP but not including a specialist or consultant physician. The medical practitioner should generally be the patient's 'usual doctor', that is, the GP (or a GP in the same practice) who has provided the majority of services to the patient in the past 12 months, and/or is likely to provide the majority of services in the following 12 months.

The Healthy Kids Check can also be undertaken on behalf of a GP by a practice nurse. The practice nurse must be a registered or enrolled nurse who is employed by, or whose services are otherwise retained by a general practice.

A medical practitioner or nurse salaried by or contracted to an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service or health clinic can also claim for services where an exemption under subsection 19(2) of the Health Insurance Act 1973 has been granted to an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service or State/Territory Government health clinic.



Medicare Healthy Kids Check

MBS Items 709 and 711

How often can a patient receive the Healthy Kids Check?

Once only. The Healthy Kids Check is provided once, before a child enters the primary school system. Any ongoing conditions that are identified in the course of the check should be managed using existing General Practice attendance items.

A Medicare rebate is payable once only for the Healthy Kids Check for each eligible patient.

What needs to be done before the Healthy Kids Check can start (preliminary steps)?

The patient's parent/guardian must be given an explanation of the Healthy Kids Check process and its likely benefits, and must be asked by the medical practitioner or nurse whether they consent to the health check being performed. Consent must be noted on the patient record.

What does the health assessment include?

The health assessment must include each of the following components.

Information collection

The information collection component may be rendered by a nurse or other qualified health professional in accordance with accepted medical practice. Information collection must include taking a patient history (if one does not already exist) or updating an existing record. The patient record must include family and environmental factors, medical and social history, and lifestyle risk factors. Investigations should be undertaken or arranged as clinically indicated in accordance with relevant guidelines.

Assessment

The Healthy Kids Check must include an assessment of the patient's health, based on the patient history, examinations and the results of any investigations. Parents/guardians should also be encouraged to provide relevant information.

Interventions

Where appropriate, arrangements need to be put in place for referrals and follow-up of any problems identified.

Health advice

Health advice and information must be provided to the patient's parent/guardian, utilising the Department's publication **Get Set 4 Life – habits for healthy kids** and other relevant information (such as a parent-held child health record).



Is it necessary for a child to have received their four year old immunisation before they can have the Healthy Kids Check?

No. It is intended that the Healthy Kids Check be delivered in conjunction with the four year old immunisation. This does not mean that the four year old immunisation must be provided at the same time as the Healthy Kids Check. The medical practitioner or nurse providing the Check is required to document in the patient's records that:

- the four year old immunisation has already been given; or
- the four year old immunisation will be given, following the Healthy Kids Check.

However, the four year old immunisation must have been provided prior to an itemised account being issued for Medicare purposes for the Healthy Kids Check.

Does the medical practitioner or nurse providing the Healthy Kids Check also have to provide the four year old immunisation?

No. There are a range of methods for delivering the four year old immunisation, and the patient's parent/guardian may choose to have the four year old immunisation delivered in a different setting (eg. a child health centre). The medical practitioner or nurse is required to record the patient's immunisation status – ie. whether the four year old immunisation has already been provided or will be provided in the future.

Can a child who won't be immunised still receive a Healthy Kids Check?

No. In circumstances where a parent/guardian chooses not to immunise their child, the Healthy Kids Check cannot be provided as a service for which an MBS rebate may be claimed. A medical practitioner or nurse may choose to provide a service that mirrors the Healthy Kids Check, but that service would not be regarded as a Healthy Kids Check for the purpose of Medicare billing.

Is there a specific length of time for the Healthy Kids Check?

No. The Healthy Kids Check is not a time-based item.

Can another consultation be done in conjunction with the Healthy Kids Check?

No. Items 709 and 711 cannot be claimed in conjunction with another GP attendance item on the same day, except where this is clinically required. In these exceptional cases, the claim for the attendance item should be annotated to indicate that the attendance was not related to the Healthy Kids Check.

Can Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children receive the Healthy Kids Check?

Yes. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children may receive a Healthy Kids Check if they meet the patient eligibility requirements.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children under 15 years of age may also access the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Health Check (Item 708).

Is there a Medicare rebate for the Healthy Kids Check?

Yes. The MBS items are:

MBS Item 709	Attendance by a medical practitioner (including a general practitioner, but not including a specialist or consultant physician) at consulting rooms to undertake a health check for a patient who is receiving or has received their four year old immunisation. Not being an attendance on a patient in respect of whom a payment has already been made under this item or item 711. Benefits are payable on one occasion only for each eligible patient.
MBS Item 711	Service provided by a practice nurse being the provision of a health check for a patient who is receiving or has received their four year old immunisation if: (a) the service is provided on behalf of, and under the supervision of, a medical practitioner (including a general practitioner, but not including a specialist or consultant physician), and (b) the person is not an admitted patient of a hospital. Not being an attendance on a patient in respect of whom a payment has already been made under this item or item 709. Benefits are payable on one occasion only for each eligible patient.

The Medicare rebates for items 709 and 711 are paid at 100% of the schedule fee.

Can the bulk billing incentives be claimed in conjunction with the Healthy Kids Check?

Yes. Where the patient is a child under 16 years of age and the service is bulk billed, the GP can also claim a bulk billing incentive payment. For more information visit the Department of Health and Ageing's website at www9.health.gov.au/mbs.

At what stage of the health assessment can the doctor or the practice directly bill Medicare or invoice the patient's parent/guardian for the service?

The GP or the practice may only directly bill or invoice the patient when all of the components of the Healthy Kids Check have been completed and the four year old immunisation has been received.

If only one component is completed, such as the Healthy Kids Check without provision of the four year old immunisation, Item 709 or 711 will be deemed incomplete and non-claimable.

Information and resources

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

Your local division of general practice will also be able to provide further information and support.

Medicare Health Kids Check

MBS Items 709 and 711

PATIENT HISTORY

Family and environmental factors:

- Family relationships
- Care arrangements
-

Medical and social history:

- Paediatrician
- Previous presentations
-

Lifestyle risk factors:

- Eating Habits
- Physical activity/inactivity
-

PATIENT'S OVERALL HEALTH STATUS

HEALTH ISSUES IDENTIFIED AND DISCUSSED WITH THE PATIENT'S PARENT/GUARDIAN

RECOMMENDED INTERVENTION AND/OR REFERRALS

GP or Practice Nurse:

Signature:

/ /

If the check has not been conducted at the patient's usual medical practice, a copy of the record is to be sent to:

/ /

Name of 'usual' GP/Practice

Parent/Guardian consent to provide copy



EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT (Mandatory from this point forward):

Measure height and weight

Height:

Weight:

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

Check eyesight - including but not limited to:

- conducting a visual inspection of the eyes
- using the LEA Children's Chart or similar, if appropriate
- seeking parental/other concerns about vision (eg. amblyopia, squint, infection, injury)
- questioning family history of eyesight problems

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

Check hearing - including but not limited to:

- conducting an ear examination
- seeking parental/other concerns regarding the child's hearing or listening, following instructions or language
- questioning any history of ear infections, ear discharge, recurrent or chronic otitis media
- referring the child to an audiologist for a hearing assessment if appropriate

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

Check oral health - teeth and gums (a potential tool could include Lift the Lip)

- questioning whether the child has visited the dentist
- questioning how often the child brushes their teeth

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

Question toilet habits – including but not limited to:

- questioning whether the child needs assistance or can use a toilet independently
- questioning whether the child is a bed wetter

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

Note known or suspected allergies

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

ADDITIONAL MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION (Non-mandatory from this point forward):

The health check may include the following matters, at the discretion of the GP/practice nurse and according to his or her clinical judgement. It may be useful to refer to the patient's State/Territory personal health record and the Guide.

General wellbeing:

Discuss eating habits – including but not limited to:

- discuss the child's appetite
- questioning about the variety of foods the child eats
- discussing the frequency of consuming processed foods

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

Discuss physical activity – including but not limited to:

- discuss the time spent in active or energetic play
- discuss the time spent in sedentary activities

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

Question speech and language development - including but not limited to:

- seeking parent/guardian concerns about:
 - the number of words their child uses or their understanding of directions
 - whether their child speaks clearly and takes an active part in conversations

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

Question fine and gross motor skills - including but not limited to:

- picking up small objects
- walking, running, jumping, hopping, climbing stairs
- drawing without scribbling
- riding a tricycle

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

Question behaviour and mood - including but not limited to:

- sleeping
- energy levels
- social and emotional well-being
- ability to separate from main carer

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

Other examinations considered necessary by GP/practice nurse

EXAMINATION	IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION