

# INFORMATION SHEET



## HbA1c for diagnosis of diabetes mellitus

In November 2014, Medicare introduced a new pathology item for the use of the HbA1c test for diagnosing type 2 diabetes.

The test can be requested for asymptomatic at-risk patients, once every 12 months.

When requesting the test for diagnostic purposes, indicate on the pathology request form that the test is for diagnostic purposes.

Your pathology provider will use the MBS item **66841** if the HbA1c test is for diagnostic purposes.

### Summary

- Do not code the patient as having diabetes
- Indicate on the pathology request form that the test is for diagnostic purposes
- GPs can request an HbA1c test for determining a diagnosis of diabetes for the same patient once every 12 months

## HbA1c for monitoring of established diabetes mellitus

In patients with established diabetes, the HbA1c test is rebated up to four times per year as part of routine diabetes management.

Your pathology provider will use the MBS item numbers **66551**, **66554**, or **73840** if the test is for diabetes management.

When requesting the test for diabetes management, indicate on the pathology form that the patient is known to have diabetes.

### Summary

- Indicate on the pathology request form that the patient is known to have diabetes
- GPs can request an HbA1c test up to four times per year for patients with known, or established, diabetes up to four times per year

## Relationship between HbA1c and the diabetes PIP

For the purposes of calculating the diabetes PIP, the number of patients in a practice with established diabetes mellitus is based on the number of patients (based on SWPE) who have had an HbA1c test (MBS items 66551, 66554 or 73840) in the last two years.

Additionally, to receive an outcomes payment, at least two per cent of practice patients must be diagnosed with diabetes mellitus and a diabetes cycle of care must be completed for at least 50 per cent of these patients.

It is important to indicate on pathology request forms the reason for the HbA1c test (or indicate the relevant MBS item number) to distinguish whether the test is for diagnosis or management of diabetes.

Unless specifically indicated, Medicare will determine that HbA1c tests are for management of diabetes, which may falsely elevate the calculated population of patients with diabetes, impacting the number of patients requiring a cycle of care to be in place to be eligible for the diabetes PIP.