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| **Back to Basics: MBS smoking and nicotine cessation items** |
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| **Introduction/Aim:** More than 8 million people die from tobacco each year, including an estimated 3.3 million deaths in 2017 from respiratory-related conditions such as chronic and acute respiratory diseases, tuberculosis and lung cancers. In Australia, it was estimated that tobacco use was responsible for 39.3%, 10.7% and 21.5% of the disease burden due to respiratory, cardiovascular and cancer, respectively, in 2018. Current estimation showed that under the conditions of a 30% expected treatment failure rate among non-smoking patients, a smoking prevalence of 20% could cause a 60% increased risk of failure of first-line cancer treatment. Smoking and nicotine cessation is an important means to accelerating declines in tobacco-and vaping-related harms, with respiratory health professionals providing front line care. This can make substantial contributions to supporting quit attempts and staying quit, ultimately improving health outcomes. This paper quantified Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) nicotine and smoking cessation items from July 2021 to May 2023.**Methods:** We analysedMBS data claimed for the nicotine and smoking cessation services processed by Services Australia. We quantified the 18 MBS items available for face-to-face and telehealth services, overall, by jurisdictions, time and patients’ characteristics. **Results:** Overall, 94,862 nicotine and smoking cessation services claims were processed between July 2021 and May 2023. These services were offered via face-to-face (n=57,491), telephone (n=23,943) and video-conferencing (n=13,428). The vast majority of the claims were shorter consults made by General Practitioners (GPs) in an appointment under 20 minutes. Greater numbers of male patients were used video-conferencing services than females. Claim numbers varied over time for all items, and by jurisdiction and patients’ age.**Conclusion:** The majority of people who smoke want to quit, or wish they never took up smoking. This study outlined MBS nicotine and smoking cessation counselling service utilisation across all states and territories. There is a need to better utilise the items and to encourage their use in order to support the 2.3 million Australians who smoke daily to quit, and stay quit, ultimately improving health outcomes.**Grant Support:** This work did not receive grant from anybody. |