EXTENDED REQUESTING RIGHTS FOR PODIATRISTS
Changes to the Health Insurance Regulations 1975
Effective 1 November 2007

Podiatrists will be able to provide more comprehensive clinical service to patients. In addition to radiographic examinations of the extremities, podiatrists will be able to request three musculoskeletal ultrasound (MSKUS) items under the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS).

From November 2007 podiatrists may request:

ITEM NUMBER	ITEM DESCRIPTOR
55836	ANKLE OR HIND FOOT, 1 or both sides, ultrasound scan of, where: (a) the services is not associated with a service to which an item in Subgroups 2 or 3 of this Group applies; and (b) the referring practitioner is not a member of a group of practitioners of which the providing practitioner is a member (R) **Fee:** $109.10 **Benefit:** 75% = $81.85 85% = $92.75
55840	MID FOOT OR FORE FOOT, 1 or both sides, ultrasound scan of, where: (a) the service is not associated with a service to which an item in Subgroups 2 or 3 of this Group applies; and (b) the referring practitioner is not a member of a group of practitioners of which the providing practitioner is a member (R) Fee: $109.10 Benefit: 75% = $81.85 85% = $92.75
55844	ASSESSMENT OF A MASS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SKIN OR SUBCUTANEOUS STRUCTURES, NOT BEING A PART OF THE MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM, 1 or more areas, ultrasound scan of, where: (a) the service is not associated with a service to which an item in Subgroups 2 or 3 of this Group applies; and (b) the referring practitioner is not a member of a group of practitioners of which the providing practitioner is a member (R) Fee: $87.35 Benefit: 75% = $65.55 85% = $74.25

Also of relevance to the MKKUS items and effective 1 November 2007, is the removal of Regulation 17 Multiple musculoskeletal ultrasound and a new note in the MBS under Subgroup 6: Musculoskeletal (MSK) ultrasound. The removal of Regulation 17 will mean that from 1 November, patients will be able to receive more than one Medicare rebate for multiple MSKUS performed on the same day. The second or any subsequent scan will be rebated less $5 since "Rule A" of the multiple diagnostic imaging services rule will still apply.

In addition to the removal of the multiple MSKUS rule, a new note will be included in the MBS to reinforce the conditions for Medicare eligibility contained in the MSKUS item descriptors. Where the item descriptor specifies that a single service may consist of '1 or both sides' a single Medicare rebate is payable and therefore should be performed at a single attendance. Patients should not be advised to return on another day to have the second side of a bilateral scan performed.