

Health Insurance (1999-2000 Diagnostic Imaging Services Table) Amendment Regulations 2000 (No. 2) 2000 No. 147

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

STATUTORY RULES 2000 NO. 147

Issued by the Authority of the Minister for Health and Aged Care

Health Insurance Act 1973

Health Insurance (1999-2000 Diagnostic Imaging Services Table) Amendment Regulations 2000
(No. 2)

Section 133 of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* ('the Act') provides that the Governor-General may make regulations prescribing matters for purposes of the Act.

The Act provides for payments to eligible persons for professional services by way of Medicare benefits.

Section 4AA of the Act provides that the table of diagnostic imaging services may be prescribed by the Regulations. The Health Insurance (1999-2000 Diagnostic Imaging Services Table) Regulations 1999 prescribe such a table.

Section 9 of the Act provides that Medicare benefits shall be calculated by reference to the fees for medical services (including diagnostic imaging services) set out in a table which included the Diagnostic Imaging Services Table (the Table)

This Regulation incorporates the following change to the Table:

9 amendment to a rule for professional supervision for ultrasound.

In September 1999 a professional supervision rule for diagnostic ultrasound was added to the *Health Insurance (1999-2000 Diagnostic Imaging Services Table) Regulations 1999*. This provision aimed to promote quality and appropriate ultrasound services by ensuring that these services are provided where a medical specialist is available to monitor and influence the conduct and diagnostic quality of the examination, including, if necessary, by personal attendance on the patient.

The 1999 regulation provides exemption for two categories of practitioners to continue to provide W (referred) type ultrasounds. However, these exempt practitioners did not have to meet the requirement of being available to monitor and influence the examination or personally attend the patient, where the service is performed on their behalf

As a result of consultation with providers of ultrasound through the Ultrasound Group, the regulation has been amended to require these 'grand-fathered' practitioners to meet the same supervision requirements as specialists.

This regulation will enhance the quality of ultrasound services provided by "grand-fathered" practitioners and ensure that there is consistency in the standard of care rendered by a specialist, consultant physician or a general practitioner who qualifies under the exemptions.

This change has been developed in consultation with the Australian and New Zealand Association of Physicians in Nuclear Medicine, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists, the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, the Urological Society of Australia, the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, the Australian Society of Ultrasound in Medicine, and the Australian Sonographers Association.

Details of the Regulations are in the attachment.

The regulations commence on 1 July 2000.

ATTACHMENT

Details of the Health Insurance (1999-2000 Diagnostic Imaging Services Table) Amendment Regulations 2000

Regulation 1 provides that the name of the regulations will be the Health Insurance (1999-2000 Diagnostic Imaging Services Table) Amendment Regulations 2000 (No. 2).

Regulation 2 provides for the regulations to commence on 1 July 2000.

Regulation 3 provides that the Health Insurance (1999-2000 Diagnostic Imaging Services Table) Regulations 1999 will be amended by Schedule 1 of the proposed Regulations.

Changes to the Table

Schedule 1 item 1 will substitute a new rule I OAA in Schedule 1, Part 1.