

# Psychology

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## Introduction

Comcare can fund as medical treatment the appropriate cost of psychology and/or counselling services where:

- the services are for the purpose of diagnosing or alleviating an injury
- there is clinical justification for the treatment for the compensable condition
- the treatment is likely to be effective and achieve or maintain measurable functional improvement, and
- the treatment promotes progress towards functional independence, participation and self-management.

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## Commencing psychology treatment

A referral from a medical practitioner is not required for the commencement of psychology services by an employee. Comcare is able to fund an initial five sessions, each of a maximum 60-minute consultation, of psychology for an employee prior to the submission of a [Psychology Treatment Plan](#) (PTP). Comcare requires a PTP to be completed and submitted when:

- psychology is expected to exceed 5 treatment sessions
- there has been a gap in treatment of greater than 12 months, or
- the employee attends a new psychology clinic.

All fields on the form should be completed before it is submitted to Comcare. Comcare will fund the completion of a PTP as part of the consultation session.

## Extended consultations

Psychologists are required to obtain prior approval where there is reasonable justification for consultations to exceed beyond 60 minutes in duration. In the absence of prior approval, Comcare will only fund a maximum of 60 minutes per consultation per day.

Requests for extended consultations can be made via a [Psychology Extended Consultation Request form](#). This form is required in addition to any PTP.

**Note:** All extended consultation requests are priority screened by the Clinical Panel.

## Gaps in treatment

A gap in treatment is when no psychology services have been received or requested for more than 12 months, and treatment resumes after this period. Comcare is able to fund psychology services after a gap in treatment via the following process:

- completion of a PTP form
- confirmation that the treatment is related to the work-related injury

## Ongoing treatment

A PTP can be marked as '*Initial*' for the initial treatment plan and '*Review*' for subsequent plans. The psychologist must provide a subsequent treatment plan marked as '*Review*' for any additional psychology services considered 'required'

beyond the initial treatment plan.

Generally, Comcare should only continue to fund psychology treatment if it:

- is the most clinically justifiable treatment based on the best available research evidence
- is achieving measurable progress towards goals focused on optimising function, participation and return to work
- empowers the employee to manage their condition, and
- considers any biological, psychological and social factors that could influence the employee's recovery or return to work.

Any period of ongoing treatment should be covered by a PTP, with approval being for the number of sessions indicated, or otherwise agreed to by the treating practitioner e.g., via [Clinical Panel Review](#). This provides transparency and opportunity for review regarding proposed treatment, goals and progress toward self-management.

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## Invoicing for psychology/counselling treatment

Comcare requires that the actual provider of the service be identified on each invoice for payment. It is the responsibility of the registered provider to ensure invoices submitted to Comcare are correct, regardless of who has prepared the account. Invoices sent to Comcare must display the following information:

- employee name
- employee claim number
- date of services
- description of services
- item code

- service location
- amount billed for each service, and
- name of treating psychologist/counsellor.

**Note:** Comcare will pay service providers a fee for providing a completed PTP required by Comcare. Comcare will not pay for an additional treatment session on the day that a PTP is completed.

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