

## MEDICARE SAFETY NET

Medicare safety nets support people who have high out-of-pocket medical costs for services provided out-of-hospital. The safety nets do not apply to services that are not listed on the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) or to MBS services that are delivered in hospital.

Once your out-of-pocket medical costs reach a certain amount, Medicare gives you a higher amount back for the rest of the year. The increased benefits apply to either your:

- 'gap expenses' – the difference between the Medicare benefit you get and the schedule fee
- 'out-of-pocket expenses' – the difference between the Medicare benefit you get and what your health practitioner charges.

### **Extended Medicare Safety Net (EMSN)**

Once your out-of-pocket expenses reach the threshold in a calendar year, Medicare will cover up to 80% of any further out-of-pocket expenses you have for out-of-hospital medical services that are subsidised under the MBS.

A number of out-of-hospital services have a cap on how much Medicare will pay. This means that if your out-of-pocket expenses are higher than that cap, the amount you get back might be lower than 80%. The EMSN does not affect how much you get from your private health insurance.

### **For 2023, the EMSN thresholds are:**

- \$770.30 for people who have a concession card or get Family Tax Benefit Part A
- \$2,414 for others.

Medicare reviews these each year on 1 January, in line with any rise in the cost of living

If you're an individual, you don't need to do anything – you'll automatically get the higher rebate once you reach the threshold. If you're a family, you need to let Services Australia know, so they can record your family's combined expenses.